

# The Life of Admiral Viscount Exmouth eBook

## The Life of Admiral Viscount Exmouth

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## THE LIFE

OF

## ADMIRAL VISCOUNT EXMOUTH

### CHAPTER I.

#### FAMILY HISTORY.

The life and services of Lord Exmouth are of no common interest; not more because he has advanced the reputation of his country, and connected his name with her history, than that he began his career an almost unfriended orphan, and rose to the highest honours of his profession without having been indebted to fortune or to patronage. One of the most interesting spectacles is that of rising merit struggling from its difficulties. The most encouraging, is the honour which rewards its exertions. The young officer, who, like him, has devoted himself to an arduous service, with nothing to rely on but his sword, may derive instruction from his example, and encouragement from his success.

Edward Pellew, Viscount Exmouth, descended from a family which was settled in the west of Cornwall for many centuries, but came originally from Normandy, where the name is still met with. After the close of the war he received a letter from a family there, claiming kindred, and offering the name and armorial bearings in proof. The original orthography, "Pelleu," was retained until a comparatively recent period. They are said to have landed at Pengersick Castle, near St. Michael's Mount, and appear to have remained in that part of the county until the beginning of the 17th century. They had a family tomb in Breage, a parish on the eastern side of the Mount's Bay, in which they had acquired property, and they still possess a small estate in that neighbourhood. Part of this early history, it will be seen, can rest only upon tradition; and indeed, it is of very little importance. The weakness of seeking credit from remote ancestors, for one whose personal honours require no further illustration, may well be exploded. But there is one kind of ancestry where an inquiry will always be interesting—that where the traits which distinguished the founder of a family may be traced in the character of his forefathers.

The earliest of the family of whom anything is certainly known lived during the great rebellion at Plymouth, where his loyalty made him so obnoxious to the republicans, that the mob on one occasion assaulted him on the Hoe, and plundered his house. A small piece of antique plate, still preserved, and bearing the date 1645, was the only article of value saved from them. His son, Captain Pellew, Lord Exmouth's great-grandfather, served in the navy during the war of the succession. A very fine portrait of him remains.



Humphry Pellew, the grandfather, was an extensive merchant. He held a large property in shipping, and traded chiefly to America, where he had purchased a valuable tobacco plantation of 2,000 acres, in Kent Island, Maryland. Of this estate, upon which the town of Annapolis Royal is partly built, the writings remain, but the property was lost at the revolt of the colonies. No portion of the compensation fund voted by Parliament was in this instance ever received; and General Washington afterwards declared to a friend of the family, that the fact of three of the brothers having borne arms against the States would prevent the success of any application to the American Government.



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Mr. Pellew built part of Flushing, a large village on the shores of Falmouth harbour, including the present manor-house, in which he resided; but this, being leasehold property, has long ago reverted to the lord. In 1692, he married Judith Sparnon, of Sparnon and Pengelly, in Breage, by whom he had six sons and five daughters. Mr. Pellew maintained a high character through life, and his memory was long preserved among the older inhabitants of the village. He died in 1721. His son Israel married Miss Trefusis, upon whom the estate of Trefusis, which includes Flushing, was entailed, in default of more direct heirs from the then possessor; Thomas married Miss Whittaker, who was grand-daughter of Viscount Fauconberg by a daughter of Cromwell; three died unmarried; and the children of the youngest son were at length the only male survivors of the family.

Samuel, youngest son of Humphry Pellew, commanded a Post-office packet on the Dover station, to which he had been appointed through the interest of the Spencer family. He was a man of great determination, and became in consequence the subject of a characteristic song, which was long remembered by the watermen and others at Calais. The recollections of his family, and documents which have been preserved, show him to have been most exemplary in the duties of private life. In 1652, he married Constance Langford, daughter of Edward Langford, Esq., a gentleman descended from a considerable family in Wiltshire. The co-heiress of Edward Langford, Esq., of Trowbridge; married Henry Hyde, of Hinton, father of the great Earl of Clarendon, and by the marriage of her grand-daughter with James II. became the ancestor of Queen Mary and Queen Anne. Thus connected by blood, as well as attached by principle to the exiled family, Mr. Langford joined the standard of the Pretender in 1715, and distinguished himself at the battle of Preston. After the Rebellion was suppressed, he escaped to the west of Cornwall, and settled at Penzance. The Pretender took an opportunity to acknowledge his services by a present of costly china. His daughter, Mrs. Pellew, was a woman of extraordinary spirit. Mr. Pellew's political feelings differed widely from those of his father-in-law. It was his practice to make his children drink the king's health on their knees every Sunday. He died in 1765, leaving six children, four of them boys, of whom the eldest was at that time eleven years old, and Lord Exmouth, the second, only eight. Three years after, an imprudent marriage of the widow deprived the children of their remaining parent, and threw them upon the world with scanty resources, and almost without a friend.

It has been well observed, that a general condition of distinguished eminence is to be required to force a way to it through difficulties. Desertion at an early age indeed subjects the individual to a most severe trial; but where there is strength to bear the discipline, it exalts the principle which it fails to subdue, and adds force to the energies which it cannot tame. The Pellews were probably indebted for much of their success, as well as for the fearless independence which distinguished them, to the circumstances which thus compelled them from childhood to rely only upon themselves.



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Samuel Humphry, the eldest brother, was intended for the navy, and was borne on the books of H.M.S. *Seaford*, Captain Macbride. But afterwards devoting himself to medicine, he became one of the earliest pupils of John Hunter, with Home, Pitcairn, and Baillie, for his class-fellows. After serving for some time as a surgeon of marines, and assistant surgeon to the Dockyard at Plymouth, he relinquished a partnership with Dr. Geach, of the Royal Hospital, and settled at Truro, where he obtained a considerable and lucrative practice. He finally became collector of the customs at Falmouth. Gifted with a clear and active mind, he did not confine himself to the routine of his official duties, and his suggestions on several important subjects were adopted by the Government. The Quarantine Law of 1800 was first proposed by him, and framed chiefly on his suggestions; as well as a tonnage duty by which the charges of the quarantine establishment were covered. The convoy duty was also imposed on his recommendation; and he first proposed the plan of warehousing goods in bond, and was much consulted during the perfecting of the measure, by which so great facilities have been afforded to the trade of the country—to the merchant, relief from the necessity of locking up large amounts of capital; to the consumer, cheapness, and a security against adulteration. Mr. Pellew served at his post till he was fourscore years old, and for years beyond that, he retained the freshness of feeling and enthusiasm of youth. He died in his 90th year.

Israel, the third brother, born August 25th, 1758, was sent to sea at an early age. He served with distinction in the American war, and was one of the officers entrusted with the defence of posts, when the Comte d'Estaing appeared off New York. Promoted to be a lieutenant, he cut out a vessel so well protected by batteries, that his brother officers thought it a service too desperate to be attempted. In command of the armed cutter *Resolution*, he engaged and captured in the North Sea, the Dutch privateer *Flushinger*, of fourteen guns, which had proved so destructive a cruizer, that the merchants of Hull memorialized the Admiralty in his favour; and Keppell, the First Lord, continued him for three years in command of the cutter, notwithstanding the signature of peace the day before the action, expressly to reward his gallantry and success. He was made a commander in 1790. He was passenger in his brother's frigate the *Nymphe*, when she gave the first earnest of the naval successes of the war, by the capture of the *Cleopatra*; and he contributed much to the brilliant result of the action, by taking charge of the after quarter-deck gun, with which he disabled the enemy's wheel. For this service he was at once promoted and appointed to a ship, and he continued to be so actively employed, that he never once saw his family, till after the peace. In September, 1796, his ship, the *Amphion*,



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32-gun frigate, blew up while alongside the hulk in Hamoaze, and nearly all on board, about 300, perished. Captain Pellew was at the moment at dinner in his cabin, with Captain Swafeld, of the *Overysse*, 64, and the first lieutenant. At the shock of the explosion, which took place in the fore magazine, Captain Pellew, and the lieutenant sprang into the quarter gallery, and were thrown into the water and saved; Captain Swaffield perished.

Soon after the renewal of hostilities, he was appointed by Earl St. Vincent to the *Conqueror*, one of the largest and most powerful seventy-four's in the Navy. She carried twenty-four pounders on her upper deck, there being only fourteen ships, out of 100 of the same nominal force, which were so heavily armed. In her he shared with Nelson the chase of the combined fleet to the West Indies and back, and took a very distinguished part in the battle of Trafalgar. Following, abreast of the *Leviathan*, the three leading ships of Nelson's column, she engaged, captured, and took possession of the *Bucentaure*, flagship of the commander-in-chief of the enemy, Villeneuve; and she afterwards assisted in the capture of the *Santissima Trinidad*, and *Intrepide*. In 1807, still in command of the *Conqueror*, Captain Pellew joined in saving the fleet and royal family of Portugal, when the French, under Junot, entered Lisbon; and afterwards in blockading a Russian squadron of nine sail of the line in the Tagus, till the victory of Vimiera placed them in the hands of the British.

He became rear-admiral in July 1810, and on his brother being appointed commander-in-chief in the Mediterranean in the following May, he sailed with him as captain of the fleet, to the close of the war. On the return of Napoleon from Elba, he rejoined his brother in the same capacity, having, on the extension of the Order of the Bath, been appointed a knight-commander. His last service was to take a chief part in the negotiations with the Barbary Powers, for the abandonment of Christian slavery, in 1816. Lord Exmouth would not allow him, or any of his family, to accompany him to the attack on Algiers, in the autumn of that year. He died at Plymouth, June 19th, 1832, only seven months before his brother Lord Exmouth.

John, the youngest brother, entered the army. While still a youth, he became aide-de-camp to General Phillips in Burgoyne's campaign, and was killed in the battle of Saratoga.

Edward, the second son of Samuel and Constance Pellew, was born at Dover, April 19, 1757. He was named after his maternal grandfather, and as there appeared at first but little probability that he would live, he was baptized on the same day. Before he was quite eight years old, he lost his father. The widow then removed with her family to Penzance, where he was placed at school with the Rev. James Parkins, the clergyman of the parish. Here he gave a remarkable proof of a daring spirit. A house, in which was

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a considerable quantity of gunpowder, took fire; and while every one else was afraid to approach, he went alone into the burning house and brought out all the powder. He was afterwards sent to the grammar school at Truro, of which the Rev. Mr. Conon was head master, under whom he made a satisfactory progress, and before he left could readily construe Virgil. As it was then the general practice in schools to allow the boys to settle their own disputes, the fearlessness of his character, and a strength beyond his years, enabled him to maintain a very respectable position among his school-fellows. At length, having inflicted upon some opponent a more severe punishment than was usual in juvenile combats, the fact came under the cognizance of the master, and to escape a threatened flogging, he ran away. He told his elder brother, who had now to act as head of the family, that he would not return to school to be flogged for fighting, but would go to sea directly. Happily, his inclinations were indulged, though his grandfather, who wished him to be placed in a merchant's office, strongly opposed the step. "So, sir," said the old gentleman, when the boy came with his brothers to take a farewell dinner with him, "they are going to send you to sea. Do you know that you may be answerable for every enemy you kill? and, if I can read your character, you will kill a great many!" "Well, grandpapa," replied young Pellew, "and if I do not kill them, they'll kill me!"

He entered the navy towards the end of 1770, in the *Juno*, Captain Stott, which was sent to the Falkland Islands, in consequence of the forcible seizure of them by the Spanish squadron. It is remarkable that this paltry dispute, which might be almost forgotten but for the virulent invective of "Junius," and the masterly defence of the Government by Dr. Johnson, should have given to the navy two such officers as Nelson and Pellew; neither of whom might otherwise have found an opportunity to join the service until they were too old, in the five years of peace which followed. After the *Juno* had been paid off, Captain Stott was appointed to the *Alarm*, in which Mr. Pellew followed him to the Mediterranean, where an unpleasant difference with his commander made him leave the ship. Captain Stott, who had been a boatswain with Boscawen, was an excellent seaman, but unfortunately retained some habits not suited to his present rank. He kept a mistress on board. Among the midshipmen was a boy named Frank Cole, who was three years younger than Mr. Pellew, but had entered on board the *Juno* at the same time. Mr. Pellew was warmly attached to him. The woman had some pet fowls, which were allowed to fly about; and one day, when the ship was at Marseilles, and the captain absent, one of them was driven off the quarter-deck by young Cole, which led to great abuse from the woman, and a sharp reply from the boy. When the captain returned, he became so much enraged by her representations,

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that he not only reprimanded the youngster severely for what he termed his insolence, but so far forgot himself as to give him a blow. This was not to be borne, and having consulted his friend Pellew, he applied for his discharge. Captain Stott ordered a boat immediately, for the purpose, as he said, of turning him on shore. Pellew instantly went to the captain, and said, "If Frank Cole is to be turned out of the ship, I hope, sir, you will turn me out too." Their spirited conduct attracted the notice of the two lieutenants, Keppel and Lord Hugh Seymour, and laid the foundation of a friendship which continued through life: and Lord Hugh Seymour, finding that the boys had no money, very kindly gave them an order on his agent at Marseilles. Captain Stott afterwards tried to induce them to return, but not succeeding, he gave them the highest testimonials of their ability and desert, saying that he believed that they would become an honour to the service. Mr. Pellew found a master of a merchant vessel on shore, who had known his family at Dover, and now offered to take him to Lisbon, but declined to accommodate a second passenger. Mr. Pellew pleaded so earnestly for his young friend, and so positively refused to leave him, that the other at length consented to give them both a passage. From Lisbon they reached Falmouth in one of the packets. Little could he then suppose that he was next to see Marseilles as a commander-in-chief, and one day to save it from destruction. Twelve years after, when he had become a post captain, and was in command of the *Winchelsea*, he took under his protection a son of Captain Stott, who was then dead, and did every thing in his power to promote the young man's interests.

It was now his happiness to sail in the *Blonde*, with Captain Pownoll, an officer who had been trained and brought forward by Admiral Boscawen, and whose character was among the highest in the service. Captain Pownoll soon appreciated the merit and promise of his midshipman, who returned his kindness with almost the affection of a son. Such mutual confidence and attachment between a captain and his midshipman has very rarely been met with; and it was peculiarly fortunate for Mr. Pellew, that his quick and determined character, which, with a judgment not yet matured by experience, might have carried him into mistakes, found a guide so kind and judicious as Captain Pownoll.

And here it will not be uninteresting to observe how far the influence of a great commander may extend. St. Vincent and Pownoll, who were brought up under Boscawen, and received their lieutenant's commissions from him, contributed materially to form a Nelson and an Exmouth; each the founder of a school of officers, whose model is the character of their chief, and their example his successes.



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Active beyond his companions, and devoted to his profession, he soon became a thorough seaman; while the buoyancy of youth, and his playful, fearless spirit, prompted him continually to feats of extraordinary daring. In the spring of 1775, General Burgoyne took his passage to America in the *Blonde*, and when he came alongside, the yards were manned to receive him. Looking up, he was surprised and alarmed to see a midshipman on the yard-arm standing on his head. Captain Pownoll, who was at his side, soon quieted his apprehensions, by assuring him that it was only one of the frolics of young Pellew, and that the General might make himself quite at ease for his safety, for if he should fall, he would only go under the ship's bottom, and come up on the other side. What on this occasion was probably spoken but in jest, was afterwards more than realized; for he actually sprang from the fore-yard of the *Blonde*, while she was going fast through the water, and saved a man who had fallen overboard. Captain Pownoll reproached him for his rashness, but he shed tears when he spoke of it to the officers, and declared that Pellew was a noble fellow.

The revolt of the American colonies, which rose in this year to the importance of a national war, was soon to furnish him with objects worthy of his skill and courage. On the 10th of May the Americans surprised Ticonderoga, and, having secured the command of Lake Champlain by a strong squadron, were enabled to prosecute offensive operations against Canada. Sir Guy Carleton, the governor and commander-in-chief of that province, had very inadequate means to defend it. The enemy took Montreal, and in the beginning of December laid siege to Quebec, expecting an easy conquest; but their commander, General Montgomery, who had summoned Sir Guy Carleton in the most arrogant and threatening style, was killed on the 31st, in attempting to storm the place, and his troops were repulsed. The siege, however, was continued by Arnold, till Commodore Sir Charles Douglas, in the *Isis*, with two other ships under his Orders, forced his way through the ice, much before the season at which the river is usually open. His appearance drove the besiegers to a hasty flight, in which they suffered such extreme privations, especially their sick and wounded, that General Carleton most humanely issued a proclamation, in which he ordered them to be treated as fellow-creatures in distress; and encouraged them to claim the offered hospitality, by assuring them that they should be unconditionally liberated as soon as they were able to return home. At the same time, with energy equal to his humanity, he hastened to complete the deliverance of the province. Additional reinforcements which reached him in the spring enabled him to give the enemy a final defeat at Trois Rivieres in June, and then to take measures for wresting from them the command of Lake Champlain; an object essential to the security of Canada, as well as to prosecuting offensive operations against the New England States.

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Lake Champlain is a long narrow lake to the N.E. of Ontario, communicating with the St. Lawrence a few miles below Montreal by the river Chamblee, or Sorel. It is nowhere more than eighteen miles across, and its average breadth does not exceed five. Below Crown Point it is a mere channel for ten or twelve miles to its southern extremity at Ticonderoga. Here it receives the waters from a small lake to the southward, Lake George, but the communication, as well as that with the St. Lawrence, is interrupted by shoals and rapids. From Lake George to the Hudson is only six or eight miles, the sole interruption to a water frontier from the St. Lawrence to New York, navigable for vessels of burden for four-fifths of its length, and for bateaux nearly all the way. The command of this line would enable the northern and southern armies to co-operate effectually; to press on the New England States along their whole border; to cut off all communication between them and the rest of the Union, and to prevent any hostile attempt on Canada.

Measures were promptly taken to secure this important object. Detachments from the King's ships at Quebec, with volunteers from the transports, and a corps of artillery, in all, nearly 700 men, were sent across to the Lake, there to construct, with timber felled by themselves, and in the presence of a superior enemy, the vessels in which they were to meet him. A party joined from the *Blonde*, under Lieutenant Dacres, with Mr. Brown, one of the midshipmen. Mr. Pellew was to have remained with the ship; but he appeared so much disappointed at the arrangement, that Captain Pownoll allowed him also to go.

The season was already so far advanced, that it would have been a creditable service only to complete the preparations for the next campaign; but the zeal and exertions of the officers and men surpassed all calculation. They got across to the Lake thirty long-boats, many large flat-bottomed boats, a vast number of bateaux, and a gondola of thirty tons, carrying them over land, or dragging them up the rapids. The keel and floor-timbers of the *Inflexible*, a ship of three hundred tons, which had been laid at Quebec, were taken to pieces, and carried over to St. John's, on the Lake, where a dockyard was established, under the superintendence of Lieutenant Schanck, an officer of extraordinary mechanical ingenuity. Here, on the morning of the 2nd September, the *Inflexible* was again laid down, and by sunset, all her former parts were put together, and a considerable quantity of additional timbers prepared. The progress of the work was like magic. Trees growing in the forest in the morning, would form part of the ship before night. She was launched in twenty-eight days from laying her keel, and sailed next evening, armed with eighteen twelve-pounders, and fully equipped for service. Two schooners, the *Maria*, and the *Carleton*; the *Loyal Convert*, gondola; the *Thunder*, a kind of flat-bottomed



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raft, carrying twelve heavy guns and two howitzers; and twenty-four boats, armed each with a field piece, or carriage-gun, formed, with the *Inflexible*, a force equal to the service, where but a few days before, the British had scarcely a boat upon the waters. No time was now lost in seeking the enemy, and Sir Guy Carleton himself embarked with the squadron. Captain Pringle, as commodore, sailed with Lieutenant Schanck in the *Inflexible*. Lieutenant Dacres, with Mr. Brown and Mr. Pellew, were appointed to the *Carleton*.

On the 11th of October, the enemy was discovered drawn up in a strong line across the passage between Valicour, one of the numerous islands on the lake, and the Western land; and so well concealed by the island, that the squadron had nearly passed without observing them. They had fifteen vessels, carrying ninety-six guns, fourteen of which were eighteen-pounders, (eight of them traversing), and twenty-three twelves. General Arnold commanded. The *Carleton*, being nearest to the enemy, attacked at once, though her force was only twelve six-pounders. Unfortunately, from the state of the wind, no other vessel could come to her assistance, and she was obliged to engage the whole force of the enemy single-handed. Sir Guy Carleton saw her desperate position with extreme anxiety, but it was impossible to bring up the squadron, and he could only send in the artillery-boats to support her. Meantime she was suffering most severely. Very early in the action, Mr. Brown lost an arm; and soon after, Lieutenant Dacres fell, severely wounded and senseless. He would have been thrown overboard as dead, but for the interference of Mr. Pellew, who now succeeded to the command. He maintained the unequal contest, till Captain Pringle, baffled in all his efforts to bring up the squadron, made the signal of recall, which the *Carleton*, with two feet water in her hold, and half her crew killed and wounded, was not in a condition to obey. In attempting to go about, being at the time near the shore, which was covered with the enemy's marksmen, she hung in stays, and Mr. Pellew, not regarding the danger of making himself so conspicuous, sprang out on the bowsprit to push the jib over. The artillery-boats now towed her out of action, under a very heavy fire from the enemy, who were enabled to bear their guns upon her with more effect, as she increased her distance. A shot cut the towrope, and Mr. Pellew ordered some one to go and secure it; but seeing all hesitate, for indeed it appeared a death-service, he ran forward and did it himself. The result of the action was far beyond anything that could have been expected from the excessive disparity of the force engaged; for the *Carleton*, with the assistance of the artillery-boats, had sunk the *Boston* gondola, carrying an eighteen pounder and two twelves; and burnt the *Royal Savage*, of twelve guns, the largest of the enemy's schooners.

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Arnold escaped in the night. The squadron pursued, and on the morning of the 13th overtook him, within a few leagues of Crown Point. After a running fight of two hours the four headmost vessels of the enemy succeeded in reaching Crown Point, and sheltering themselves in the narrow part of the lake beyond it. Two others, the *Washington* and *Jersey*, were taken; and the rest were run on shore and burnt by their own crews. The enemy then set fire to their works on Crown Point, and abandoned it.

The *Carleton's* action on the 11th, which certainly was never surpassed for gallantry and conduct, obtained for her crew the credit they so well deserved. Lieutenant Dacres, who recovered sufficiently to go home with the despatches, received promotion as soon as he arrived in England, and was honoured with a personal interview with the king. He rose to be a vice-admiral. How Mr. Pellew's services in this, his first action, were appreciated by his superior officers is best told in their own words. In a few days, Sir Charles Douglas, the senior officer at Quebec, to whose command all the Lake service was subordinate, sent him the following letter:—

“Isis, Quebec, Oct. 30th, 1776.

“SIR,—The account I have received of your behaviour on board the *Carleton*, in the different actions on the Lakes, gives me the warmest satisfaction, and I shall not fail to represent it in the strongest terms to the Earl of Sandwich and my Lord Howe, and recommend you as deserving a commission for your gallantry; and as Lieutenant Dacres, your late commander, will no doubt obtain rank for his conduct, when he reaches England, I am desired by General Sir Guy Carleton to give you the command of the schooner in which you have so bravely done your duty.

“CHARLES DOUGLAS.”

The report of Sir Charles Douglas, obtained for Mr. Pellew the following letter from the Commander-in-Chief:—

“Eagle, New York, Dec. 20th, 1776.

“SIR,—The account I have heard of your gallant behaviour from Captain Charles Douglas, of H.M.S. *Isis*, in the different actions on Lake Champlain, gives me much satisfaction, and I shall receive pleasure in giving you a lieutenant's commission, whenever you may reach New York.

“HOWE.”

It is, perhaps, a singular occurrence for a midshipman to be honoured with a letter of thanks from the First Lord of the Admiralty, but the service itself was important, and Captain Pownoll strengthened Sir Charles Douglas' report of his young officer's



conduct, by a communication of his own. Their joint eulogy obtained for Mr. Pellew the following letter from Lord Sandwich:—

“Admiralty Office, London, Jan. 5th, 1777.

“SIR,—You have been spoken of to me by Sir Charles Douglas and Captain Philemon Pownoll, for your good conduct in the various services upon Lake Champlain, in so handsome a manner, that I shall receive pleasure in promoting you to the rank of a lieutenant, whenever you come to England; but it is impossible to send you a commission where you now are, it being out of the jurisdiction of the Admiralty.

“SANDWICH.”



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Sir Guy Carleton remained at Crown Point as long as the season would permit. He employed Mr. Pellew on the narrow inlet, which extends from Crown Point to Ticonderoga, along which his proposed operations were to be conducted; and Mr. Pellew attended to his charge with unceasing vigilance and activity. On one occasion, the American Commander-in Chief, Arnold, most narrowly escaped becoming his prisoner. Having ventured upon the Lake in a boat, he was observed, and chased so closely by Mr. Pellew, that when he reached the shore and ran off, he left his stock and buckle in the boat behind him. This was preserved as long as he lived by Mr. Pellew's elder brother, to whom Arnold's son, not many years ago, confirmed the particulars of his father's escape. The General, seeing that his men were panic-struck when they found themselves chased, encouraged them to exertion by the assurance that the pursuers were not enemies, but only a boat endeavouring to outrow them. Pulling off his stock, and seizing an oar, he promised them a bottle of rum each, if they gained the shore first. Well had it been for Arnold; happy for the gallant young officer, who was the victim of his conduct; and perhaps, on so small a contingency may the fate of a campaign depend, happy for the British army, to whose misfortunes in the following year his skill and courage so materially contributed, had the fortune of the chase been different.

Mr. Pellew had a scarcely less narrow escape. He was invited with a party of officers to spend an afternoon with some young ladies in the neighbourhood, and they were on the way to keep their engagement, when Mr. Pellew stopped, and said to his companions, "We are doing a very foolish thing: I shall turn back, and I advise you all to do the same." They hesitated, but at length returned with him; and afterwards learnt that their Delilahs had posted a party of soldiers to make them prisoners.

At length Sir Guy Carleton, having satisfied himself that Ticonderoga was too strong to be attacked with his present force at that advanced season, re-embarked the troops, and returned to Canada. He there exerted himself through the winter, in making preparations for the ensuing campaign, and had almost completed them, when the command of the army was taken from him, and given to officers who had been serving under his orders. Though his success had surpassed the utmost hopes of his country, and his great local knowledge and experience claimed the confidence of the British Government, he was not even consulted on the expedition they had planned, and of which the very details were so far settled in the cabinet, that little was left to the unfortunate General who was to conduct it. He felt like an officer on the occasion, and resigned the government of Canada; but he acted like an Englishman, and though he disapproved materially of some parts of the plan, he omitted no exertion which might contribute to its success.



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The army devoted to an expedition thus inauspiciously commenced, was composed of 7,000 regular troops, of whom 3,200 were Germans; a corps of Artillery, 2,000 Canadians, and 1,000 savages. Sir Guy Carleton knew too well the ferocious and uncertain character of the Indians to trust them; but the government at home entertained a very different opinion; and it was, perhaps, the chief motive for their conduct towards him, that he had only amused and kept them quiet, instead of calling them into active service. Lieutenant-General Burgoyne was selected for the command, assisted by Major-Generals Phillips and Reidesel, and Brigadiers Frazer, Powell, Hamilton, and Specht.

Mr. Pellew was attached to the army, with the command of a party of seamen, and during its advance, was again actively employed on the Lake. While on this service, he narrowly escaped a calamity, which would have clouded all his future life. His youngest brother had come out from England to join the army; and being appointed Aide-de-Camp to General Phillips, though only seventeen years of age, he was sent down the Lake in charge of the General's baggage. He was told that he had nothing to fear from the enemy, but that he would probably meet his brother; and, with the unthinking sportiveness of youth, as he knew that he was not expected, he determined to surprise him. Accordingly, he fell in with him in the night, and when hailed, answered, "A friend!" "What friend?" exclaimed his brother; "tell who you are, or I'll shoot you." "What! do not you know me?" "No!" said the other, presenting a pistol. "Your brother John!"

On the 21st of June, the army being encamped on the western side of the Lake, and a little to the north of Crown Point, General Burgoyne made a war-feast for the savages, and addressed them in a speech which enforced every motive calculated to restrain their ferocity. But, unfortunately, he hoped to terrify the inhabitants to submission by threatening them with all the horrors of Indian warfare; and a proclamation which he published to this effect, was remembered to his serious prejudice. After a short stay at Crown Point, the troops advanced along both sides of the Lake, accompanied by the squadron under Lieutenant Schanck; and on the 2nd of July, arrived before Ticonderoga, then garrisoned by General St. Clair, with nearly 5,000 men. Ticonderoga possessed great natural advantages. It was protected on three sides by the water, with very rocky shores; and on the fourth, partly by a morass, and where that failed, by a strong breast-work. It was, indeed, commanded by a neighbouring height, Sugar Hill, which the Americans had neglected to secure, presuming upon its almost inaccessible character. Opposite Ticonderoga, they had fortified a high conical hill, Mount Independence, and connected it with the fort by a very strong bridge, which was itself protected by a massy boom. The Americans had been employed for ten months, in giving to these works the utmost possible strength and solidity.

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On the 5th, the British had nearly completed their preparations, and General Phillips had carried a road almost to the top of Sugar Hill, when General St. Clair determined to evacuate the fort. That night he sent away his stores and baggage in more than two hundred bateaux, under convoy of five armed galleys, to Skenesborough, a town about eight miles distant, at the head of a small inlet, South Bay, which branches off from the Lake at Ticonderoga. The troops marched to the same place, leaving more than a hundred guns behind.

Daylight showed the flight of the enemy. Reidesel and Frazer immediately followed in pursuit, while Burgoyne embarked the rest of the army on board the squadron. The boom and bridge, which had cost so many months of labour to complete, were presently cut through by the sailors and artificers. The squadron were enabled to pass at nine o'clock, and at three came up with the enemy near Skenesborough Falls. After a short resistance, two of the galleys surrendered, and the enemy set fire to the others, and to all their bateaux and stores.

Early next morning, Reidesel and Frazer overtook a strong body of the enemy, and defeated them, with the loss of their Commander, and nearly 1,000 men killed, wounded, and taken. Another division was encountered and routed by Colonel Hill. The fugitives escaped to Fort Edward, on the Hudson.

General Burgoyne might now have returned to Ticonderoga, and thence crossed to the head of Lake George, from which there was a waggon-road to Fort Edward, only eighteen miles distant. But fearing that a retrograde movement might check the enthusiasm of the army, now elated with their rapid career of victory, underrating the difficulties of the country, and too much despising an enemy who had been so easily dispersed, he determined to ascend Wood Creek as far as Fort Anne, whence the direct distance to the Hudson is shorter. He waited, therefore, a few days near Skenesborough for his tents, baggage, and provisions; employing himself, in the mean time, in clearing the navigation of Wood Creek, while his people at Ticonderoga were transporting the stores and artillery over the portages to Lake George.

The enemy offered little resistance in the advance to Fort Edward, but the difficulties of the country were almost insurmountable. So broken was it by creeks and morasses, that it became necessary to construct more than forty bridges and causeways, one of them over a morass two miles long. The enemy had created every possible obstruction by felling trees across the paths, and destroying the communications. Scarcely could the army advance a mile in a day, and it was the end of July before it arrived on the Hudson.

On the approach of the British, the enemy quitted Fort Edward, and retreated to Saratoga. All kinds of provisions and stores had already reached Fort George; but the means of transport were lamentably deficient, and the impossibility of bringing up

supplies compelled the army to a fatal inaction. On the 15th of August, after a fortnight's incessant exertion, there were only four days' provisions in store.

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Meantime, the enemy was daily becoming stronger. The conduct of the savages had roused the whole country; and the British bore the odium of excesses which the General could not prevent, and dared not punish. The loyalists could not remain near the army, for they were almost equally exposed to the cruelties of the savages, who spared neither age nor sex. Others, who would have gladly staid at home, found that their only safety was to take arms, and join the camp. Thus the British were left without a friend in the country, while the American commanders, who took every advantage of these atrocities, were soon at the head of an army more numerous and formidable than that which had been dispersed.

General Arnold was sent to command the force at Saratoga. He drew it back to Stillwater, a township about twelve miles down the Hudson, that he might check Colonel St. Leger, who, with 700 or 800 men, was besieging Fort Stanwix, on the Mohawk, and had given a severe defeat to a party sent to relieve it. General Burgoyne, desiring to effect a junction with St. Leger, moved down the east bank of the Hudson to Saratoga, where he threw a bridge of rafts over the river, and crossed an advanced corps. Being almost destitute of supplies, and too weak to maintain his communications with Fort George, he detached a force to surprise the enemy's magazines at Bennington; but on the 15th of August it was overpowered and defeated, with considerable loss. A week after, St. Leger was obliged to retire from before Fort Stanwix. General Gates, who was now the enemy's Commander-in-chief, detached Arnold against him with 2,000 men, and the savages, hearing of his approach, threatened to desert St. Leger if he remained, and even murdered the British stragglers on the retreat.

Provisions for thirty days were at length collected; but nearly three months had been consumed in forcing a way through almost impassable woods and morasses in the worst of weather, and in vexatious inaction from deficiency of means to advance; service far more destructive than severe fighting. A heavy swell caused by the rains had carried away the bridge, but Mr. Pellew constructed another by which the army crossed to Saratoga. The General would afterwards rally him as the cause of their subsequent misfortunes, by affording the means for their advance in the construction of this bridge. General Gates remained in the neighbourhood of Stillwater; and the army, advancing through a difficult country, found itself on the 19th of September very near the enemy. General Burgoyne marched at the head of the right wing, which was covered by the light infantry and grenadiers, under Frazer and Breyman, who moved along some high ground commanding its flank; while the left wing and artillery, under Phillips and Reidesel, kept along the road and meadows by the river side. While thus advancing, the enemy marched out of his camp, and attempted to turn the right wing, and take the British in flank. Foiled



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in this by the position of General Frazer, they countermarched under cover of the woods, and threw all their strength upon the left. Arnold led them on to repeated, and most determined attacks; nor were they finally repulsed till dusk, after four hours' severe fighting. Victory remained with the British; but the fact that the enemy could so long withstand regular troops in the open field, was decisive of the fate of the campaign.

Next morning the army took a position almost within cannon shot of the enemy, fortifying the right wing, and covering the bateaux and hospital with the left. The position of the enemy was unassailable. The savages, whose atrocities had mainly contributed to create the present difficulties of the army, now deserted altogether; and great part of the provincials and Canadians followed their example.

Hoping that he might be relieved by a diversion from New York, Burgoyne sent advices to Sir Harry Clinton, acquainting him with his present situation, and his intention to remain till the 12th of October. Meantime, he took every precaution to secure his camp. While his army was melting away by sickness, battle, and desertion, the enemy were daily becoming stronger. They had even been enabled to detach a force to the northward, which, on the 17th of September, surprised the posts on Lake George, and took an armed sloop, some gun-boats, and a great number of bateaux. They afterwards ventured to attack Ticonderoga and Mount Independence, and cannonaded them four days before they were repulsed.

At the beginning of October it became necessary to reduce the allowance of provisions. This and every other hardship was submitted to without a murmur; and never did an army better maintain its character than did this gallant force in its hour of hopeless danger. On the 7th, as there had been no intelligence from New York, General Burgoyne, accompanied by Phillips, Reidesel, and Frazer, made a movement to reconnoitre towards the enemy's left, with 1,500 men, and ten guns. They had advanced within three quarters of a mile of the enemy, when a sudden and determined attack was made upon their left, while a strong body moved to flank their right. The light infantry and part of the 24th regiment were quickly disposed to prevent the success of this latter movement, and cover a retreat; but the enemy, throwing an additional force upon the left, already hard pressed, it gave way, and the light infantry and 24th were obliged to hasten and support it. In this movement General Frazer fell. The troops retreated in good order, but with the loss of six guns.

Scarcely had they regained the camp, when the enemy rushed to storm it; Arnold, as usual, distinguishing himself by the impetuous courage with which he led on his men. The battle was maintained where he fought with the utmost desperation, till he fell, severely wounded, and his followers were driven back. In another part, the enemy were more successful. Colonel Breyman was killed, and the entrenchments, defended by the German reserve which he commanded, were carried. Night ended the battle, and left to

the army the melancholy task of summing up its loss, which included several officers of distinction. The brother of Mr Pellew was among the dead.



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But there is little grief for the slain when every one feels that he may lie with them tomorrow. That night the army moved to a new position, and next morning offered battle; but the enemy were securing their object by safer means. They pushed forward a strong body to turn the right of the British and surround them. To prevent this, the army retreated in the night through torrents of rain, to Saratoga. The sick and wounded were necessarily left behind.

Next morning, a party was seen throwing up entrenchments on the heights beyond the army; but a demonstration being made against them, they crossed the river, and joined a force on the other side. A retreat to Fort George was attempted, and the artificers were sent forward to repair the bridges, and open the road; but the appearance of the enemy made it necessary to recall them. The opposite bank of the river was covered with parties of the enemy, and the bateaux could no longer be effectually protected. Some were taken; and among others, the vessel which contained the small remaining store of provisions. This loss would have deprived the army of its last hope; but Mr. Pellew, with his sailors, attacked and recaptured the vessel. To guard against such a calamity for the future, the provisions were landed. General Burgoyne acknowledged this service in the following letter:—

“DEAR SIR,—It was with infinite pleasure that General Phillips and myself observed the gallantry and address with which you conducted your attack upon the provision-vessel in the hands of the enemy. The gallantry of your little party was deserving of the success which attended it; and I send you my sincere thanks, together with those of the army, for the important service you have rendered them upon this occasion.

“JOHN BURGOYNE.

“N.B.—The vessel contained 500 barrels of provisions, of which article the army was in great want.”

A retreat to Fort Edward by a night march, the troops carrying their provisions on their backs, now offered the only hope of safety; but while preparations were being made for this, it was found that the enemy had effectually provided against it, by throwing up entrenchments opposite the fords, and securing the heights between Fort Edward and Fort George. Secrecy was impossible, for the parties of the enemy were everywhere so numerous, that not a movement could be concealed.

Still hoping to be relieved from New York, the army, now reduced to 3,500 effective men, of whom not 2,000 were British, lingered in their camp, where they lay always under arms, with the grape and rifle shot of the enemy falling continually around them. On the 13th they had only three days' provision remaining. A council of war was therefore held, to which General Burgoyne summoned all the principal officers. Mr. Pellew attended, as commander of the brigade of seamen; and a more decisive testimony to his merits and

services could not be afforded, than the unprecedented compliment of calling a midshipman, only twenty years of age, to sit in council with generals.



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Mr. Pellew, as the youngest officer present, was required to offer his opinion the first. He pleaded earnestly that his own little party might not be included in the proposed capitulation, but permitted to make the best of their way back. He had never heard, he said, of sailors capitulating, and was confident he could bring them off. It is very possible that they might have escaped. Soldiers are accustomed to act only in orderly masses; but sailors combine with discipline the energy of individual enterprise. Mr. Pellew's party had acted as pioneers and artificers to the army during its advance; and their knowledge, and readiness at resources, would have given them great facilities in making their way through a hostile country. But their escape would have cast a very undeserved discredit upon the army, and the proposal was discountenanced. Burgoyne said, what sailors could do, soldiers might do; and if the attempt were sanctioned for the one, the others must throw away their knapsacks and take their firelocks. As Mr. Pellew still clung to his proposal, the General took him aside, and having represented the impossibility of drawing off the army, convinced him of the impropriety of permitting the attempt by a small part of it.

The result of the council was a communication to General Gates, who, knowing the desperate condition of the British army, and his own irresistible superiority, must have been surprised at the gallant spirit manifested in its hopeless extremity. When he observed that the retreat of the British was cut off, he was told that the British could never admit that their retreat was cut off while they had arms in their hands; and to his proposal that the troops should pile arms within their camp, it was replied, that sooner than submit to such an indignity, they would rush on the enemy determined to take no quarter. Terms proposed by General Burgoyne were finally acquiesced in; and the American commander, as far as *he* was concerned, faithfully observed and enforced them with the most considerate delicacy.

Mr. Pellew, after having shared in the hospitality of General Gates, was sent to England by General Burgoyne with despatches, a distinction to which his services in the campaign were considered to have entitled him. At Quebec he met his former commander, Sir Guy Carleton, whose successor had not yet arrived, and who charged him with additional despatches, and the following letter to Lord Sandwich:—

“Quebec, November 2, 1777.

“MY LORD,—This will be presented to your lordship by Mr. Edward Pellew, a young man to whose gallantry and merit during two severe campaigns in this country, I cannot do justice. He is just now returned to me from Saratoga, having shared the fate of that unfortunate army, and is on his way to England. I beg leave to recommend him to your lordship, as worthy of a commission in his Majesty's service, for his good conduct.

“GUY CARLETON.”



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He came home in a transport, in which Major Foy was also a passenger. An enemy's cruiser chased them, and the Major, as the superior officer, was proceeding to assume the command; but Mr. Pellew told him that he was the only naval officer on board, and must himself fight the ship. The Major acquiesced; and under Mr. Pellew's command, the transport engaged, and beat off the privateer.

It is scarcely necessary to state that immediately on his arrival he received the promotion which his services had so well deserved.

### CHAPTER II.

#### HIS SERVICES FROM 1778 TO 1791.

There are circumstances which in a few weeks or months may give the experience of years; and when these occur in early life, they make a permanent impression on the character. In the honours and misfortunes of the late campaign, its toils, and its anxieties, Mr. Pellew had very largely shared; and if rashness would have been the natural fault of a mind like his, a more effectual corrective could not have been desired. The quick conception, and the forethought, which enabled him in after life so well to combine caution with daring, must have greatly depended upon natural character, but he certainly owed much of it to the severe discipline of his early service.

He had now completed his twenty-first year. Tall, and with a frame of strength and symmetry, nerved by the hardships of two severe campaigns, his personal activity and power were almost unrivalled. The spot was shown for many years at Truro, where he sprang over the high gate of an inn-yard at the back of one of the hotels, when, hastening across the court to assist on the sudden alarm of a fire, he found the gate fast. The consciousness of superior strength, while it made him slow to offend, enabled him to inflict suitable punishment on offenders, and some incidents of a ludicrous character are still remembered.

The water was as a natural element to him, and he often amused himself in a manner which, to one less expert, would have been attended with the utmost danger. He would sometimes go out in a boat, and upset her by carrying a press of sail. Acts of daring like these must find their excuse in the spirit of a fearless youth. But he often found the advantage of that power and self-possession in the water which he derived from his early habits, in saving men who had fallen overboard, and especially in the happiest of all his services, his conduct at the Dutton. More than once, however, he nearly perished. In Portsmouth harbour, where he had upset himself in a boat, he was saved with difficulty, after remaining for a considerable time in the water. On another occasion, he was going by himself from Falmouth to Plymouth in a small punt, fourteen feet long, when his hat was blown overboard, and he immediately threw off his clothes and swam after it, having first secured the tiller a-lee. As he was returning with his hat, the boat



got way on her, and sailed some distance before she came up in the wind. He had almost reached her when she filled again, and he was thus baffled three or four times. At length, by a desperate effort, he caught the rudder, but he was so much exhausted that it was a considerable time before he had strength to get into the boat.



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The gratification felt at receiving his commission was soon forgotten, when he found himself appointed to a guard-ship. He repeatedly solicited more active employment, and at length took an opportunity to accost Lord Sandwich in the street at Portsmouth. The First Lord asked him if he were the young man who had been writing him so many letters; and after a reproof for accosting him in the street, appointed an audience at the hotel. He there told him that he could not be employed as he wished, because he was included in the convention of Saratoga; and when Mr. Pellew pleaded that the enemy had broken the convention, Lord Sandwich replied, that was no reason why England should do so too. At length, after every other plea had been urged in vain. Mr. Pellew took out his commission, and begged that he might be allowed to return it, declaring that he would rather command a privateer, than remain inactive while the war was going on. Lord Sandwich, smiling at his ardour, desired him to put up his commission, and promised that he should not be forgotten. Soon after, he was appointed to the *Licorne*.

In the spring of 1779, the *Licorne* sailed for the Newfoundland station, under the orders of Captain Cadogan, who had lately superseded Captain Bellew, her former commander. On her passage out, she engaged two of the enemy's cruisers, and Lieutenant Pellew's conduct in the action received the praise of his captain. She returned to England in December, when he left her to join the *Apollo*, commanded by his excellent friend and patron Captain Pownoll, who was so delighted to obtain once more the services of a follower whom he regarded with equal pride and affection, that he removed for his sake an officer of high connexions, whose seniority would have prevented Mr. Pellew from being the first lieutenant.

Mr. Pellew was too soon deprived of this inestimable friend. On the morning of the 15th of June 1780, the *Apollo*, cruising in the North Sea, in company with some other ships, was ordered away by the senior captain in pursuit of a cutter. She had almost come up with the chase, when the *Stanislaus* French frigate hove in sight, and the *Apollo* left the cutter for a more equal opponent. She overtook and brought her to action at half-past twelve, engaging under a press of sail, for the enemy made every effort to escape to the neutral port of Ostend, which was not far distant. In an hour after the action commenced, Captain Pownoll was shot through the body. He said to his young friend, "Pellew, I know you won't give his Majesty's ship away;" and immediately died in his arms. Mr. Pellew continued the action for more than an hour longer, and drove the enemy, beaten and dismasted, on shore; but he was disappointed of his prize, which claimed protection from the neutral port. The *Apollo* had five killed, besides the captain, and twenty wounded. A musket ball, which had struck Captain Pownoll in a former action, was found after his death, lodged among the muscles of the chest. The *Stanislaus* was got off, and carried into Ostend, where, being brought to sale, she was purchased by the British government, and added to the navy.



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None despond so readily as talented and sanguine young men, who are too apt to regard as irreparable the loss of anything they had relied on for the attainment of a favourite object. Only time can show that a strong mind is not dependent upon accidental circumstances, but creates facilities for itself, as a river will make if it do not find a channel for its waters. But Lieutenant Pellew was too young to have learned this lesson; and depressed as he was with grief for his patron, and disappointment at the escape of the French frigate, his prospects seemed altogether clouded. A letter which he wrote to the Earl of Sandwich on this occasion, displays all the struggle of his feelings. Circumstantial proof that everything was done to prevent the enemy from escaping; a modest allusion to his former services; expressions of the keenest sorrow for his loss; a bitter sense of his desolate condition; with earnest appeals to every feeling of justice and sympathy, which might induce the First Lord to extend to him the patronage not always given to an unfriended claimant; yet still with anxiety to do full justice to his officers and men, are blended in this very characteristic letter. It is not certain that it was ever sent; for the copy preserved is too carefully written for a rough draft, yet contains many corrections and erasures. He was, perhaps, dissatisfied with it, and before he had determined what to send, his promotion spared him the necessity of an application. Still it is an interesting document, affording, as it does, a detailed account of the action, a sketch of his former services, and a transcript of his feelings at the time.

“MY LORD,—Your Lordship will receive herewith, from Admiral Drake, an account of an action fought by H.M.S. *Apollo*, at sea, June 15, which lasted for two hours and twenty minutes. I trust your Lordship will excuse my troubling you with a private account of the engagement, to inform you of many occurrences during the action which my public letter would not admit of. When the action began, both ships had all their sails set upon a wind, with as much wind as we could bear. The ever-to-be-lamented Captain Pownoll received a wound through his body about an hour after the action commenced, when standing at the gangway. The enemy had then suffered much, having lost the yard-arms of both his lower yards, and had no sails drawing but his foresail, main-top-gallant-sail, and mizen-topsail, the others flying about. We had engaged her to leeward, which, from the heel his ship had, prevented him from making our rigging and sails the objects of his fire; though I am well convinced he had laid his guns down as much as possible. When I assumed the command, we had shot upon his bow. I endeavoured to get the courses hauled up, and the top-gallant-sails clewed up, neither of which we could do, as we had neither clue-garnets, bunt-lines, or leach-lines left. However, we got the top-gallant-sails down, with most of the stay-sails,



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and the mizen-topsail aback; but finding we still outsailed him, I had no other method left but that of sheering across his hawse, first on one bow, then on the other, raking him as we crossed, always having in view the retarding his way, by obliging him either to receive us athwart his bowsprit, in which case we should have turned his head off shore, or to sheer as we did. He, foreseeing our intention, did so; but never lost sight of gaining the shore. In this situation we had continued for a considerable time. His bowsprit had been at two different times over our quarter-deck, but never so far forward as to enable us to secure him. All this time we were approaching the shore, and we were then, I am certain, within two miles of it. I had been cautioned by the master, whose abilities and great assistance I must ever gratefully remember, more than once, of the shoal water, and I had repeatedly called for and sent after the pilot; and I am sorry to inform your Lordship he did not appear. Thus situated, in three and a half fathoms water, and steering towards danger, there was no time to hesitate; and, with the advice of the master, I wore, and brought to under the mizen, with her head off shore, until we could get the courses and other sails taken in, not having then a brace or bowline left, and being fully determined to renew the action in a few minutes. We had scarcely wore, when his foremast, main-top-mast, main-yard, and main-top fell, leaving his mainmast without rigging; and the ship at the same time took a large heel, which made us all conclude she had struck the ground. It was then half-ebb, and I firmly believe, had we pursued him, in less than ten minutes we must have run aground. She had fired a gun to leeward, seemingly to claim the protection of the port, which was answered by three from the garrison. I was at this time preparing to wear again, to anchor alongside him; but Mr. Unwin, the purser, bringing me some orders found in Captain Pownoll's pocket, among which was one relative to the observance of neutrality, I did not think myself justified in renewing the attack. I therefore continued lying to, to repair our damages. Our masts are much wounded, the rigging very much torn, and several shot under water, by which we made two feet water an hour. "Your Lordship will, I hope, pardon me, for troubling you with the relation of private feelings. The loss of Captain Pownoll will be severely felt. The ship's company have lost a father. I have lost much more, a father and a friend united; and that friend my only one on earth. Never, my Lord, was grief more poignant than that we all feel for our adored commander. Mine is inexpressible. The friend who brought me up, and pushed me through the service, is now no more! It was ever my study, and will always be so, to pursue his glorious footsteps. How far I may succeed I know not; but while he lived, I enjoyed the greatest blessing, that of being patronized by him. That happiness



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I am now deprived of, and unassisted by friends, unconnected with the great, and unsupported by the world, I must throw myself totally on your Lordship's generosity. If I have erred, it was not from the heart; for I will be bold to say, the love and honour of his country makes no heart more warm than mine. "And if, after a constant service, never unemployed for thirteen years,[1] and the character I bear with every officer with whom I have had the honour to serve; having been three years in America, and in every action on Lake Champlain, for one of which, in the *Carleton*, Lieutenant Dacres, our commander, received promotion; afterwards in a continued series of hard service, in that unfortunate expedition under General Burgoyne, whose thanks for my conduct I received in the course of the campaign, and whose misfortunes I shared at Saratoga, not in common with others, but increased by the melancholy sight of a dead brother, fallen in the service of his king; having then returned to England in a transport to fulfil the convention, with Generals Carleton's and Burgoyne's despatches, as well as General Carleton's letter, recommending me to your Lordship; and permit me to mention, my Lord, without being thought partial to my own story, my having received the thanks of Sir Charles Douglas, by letter, for my behaviour in the different actions in Canada; and having acquitted myself much to Captain Cadogan's satisfaction in action with two ships, when on our voyage to Newfoundland; and if on the present occasion, conscious of the rectitude of my conduct, I can be entitled to your Lordship's approbation, permit me to hope from your Lordship's well-known generosity, which I have already experienced, that you will extend to me that protection which I have lost in my dear departed benefactor. I have now no friend to solicit your Lordship in my favour. I stand alone to sue for your protection, in some confidence that you will not suffer the dejected and unsupported to fall. I presume to hope forgiveness for thus intruding on your time, particularly by a memorial that comes unbacked by any other name; but believe me, my Lord, there never was an officer with whom I have sailed, who would not do much more than back this, were his ability equal to his good wishes for my promotion. "I cannot, in justice to the officers, close this without assuring your Lordship of the great and unremitting assistance I received from Mr. Milburn, the master, on every occasion; and from Mr. Mansfield, the marine officer, who was particularly active to assist on the quarter-deck. To Mr. Bunce, second lieutenant, I am much indebted for his exertions on the main-deck, and his diligence was unremitting in distributing men where most wanted. Mr. Ritchie, master's mate, was particularly distinguished for his gallantry and activity; and the behaviour of the whole, my Lord, was such as entitles them to my warmest gratitude, and general commendation. Most of the wounded are dangerously so, being all by cannon balls. We had three guns dismantled.

"EDWARD PELLEW."



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Lord Sandwich's communication to him was equally kind and prompt. On the 18th of June, only three days after the action, he wrote to him:—"After most sincerely condoling with you on the loss of your much-lamented patron and friend, Captain Pownoll, whose bravery and services have done so much honour to himself and his Country, I will not delay informing you that I mean to give you immediate promotion, as a reward for your gallant and officer-like conduct."

He was made commander into an old and worn-out sloop, the *Hazard*, in which he was stationed on the eastern coast of Scotland. Having nothing but the emoluments of his profession, he found it difficult to meet the expenses required by his promotion and appointment. A tradesman in London, Mr. Vigurs, equally known and respected by the young men from Cornwall, who were generally referred to him for the advice and assistance they required on their first coming to town, not only supplied him with uniforms, though candidly told that it was uncertain when he would be able to pay for them, but offered a pecuniary loan; and Captain Pellew accepted a small sum which made the debt 70L. In a few weeks he received 160L. prize-money, and immediately sent 100L. to his creditor, desiring that the balance might be given in presents to the children, or, as he expressed it, "to buy ribbons for the girls." He never afterwards employed another tradesman. When he had become a commander-in-chief, it was his practice to prevent a deserving, but necessitous young officer from suffering similar embarrassments, by advancing him a sum equal to his immediate wants when he gave him a commission.

He took command of the *Hazard* on the 25th of July, 1780, and paid her off in the following January, having been employed between Shields and Leith. He held his next ship for a still shorter time. On the 12th of March, 1782, he commissioned the *Pelican*, a French prize, and a mere shell of a vessel; so low, that he would say his servant could dress his hair from the deck while he sat in the cabin. He sailed from Plymouth, on his first cruise, April 20th; and next day took a French privateer, with which he returned to port. On the 24th he sailed again, and stood over to the French coast. On the 28th, observing several vessels at anchor in Bass Roads, he made sail towards them; upon which a brig and a lugger, of ten or twelve guns each, laid their broadsides to the entrance of the harbour. He attacked them immediately, and compelled them to run themselves on shore under a battery, which opened on the sloop. The *Pelican* tacked, and stood out of the harbour, returning the fire, and the same night arrived at Plymouth. Her loss was only two men wounded. A heavy shot which struck her was begged by a friend, who, in a recent letter, makes a jocular allusion to it, and says that it is still doing service in the kitchen as a jack-weight. The action was most important in its results, for it obtained for him that rank in



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which he would rise by seniority to a flag. Had he remained a commander through the peace, which, but for this action, in all probability he would have done, he could not have become a flag-officer till near the close of the revolutionary war. The country would then have lost his most valuable services; and he would have been remembered only as a distinguished captain. His promotion was announced to him by the First Lord in the following terms:—

Admiralty Office. May 25, 1782.

“SIR,—I am so well pleased with the account I have received of your gallant and seaman-like conduct in the sloop you command, in your spirited attack on three privateers inside the Isle of Bass, and your success in driving them all on shore, that I am induced to bestow on you the rank of a post-captain, in the service to which your universal good character and conduct do credit: and for this purpose, I have named you to the *Suffolk*, and hope soon to find a frigate for you, as she is promised to a captain of long standing.

“KEPPEL.”

Captain Pellew thus obtained every step of rank expressly as a reward of a brilliant action in which he personally commanded; and in this respect, and in the number and extent of his services while he remained in the lower grades of his profession, he was singular, not only among his contemporaries, but perhaps in the annals of the navy.

On the 4th of June, in the absence of Captain Macbride, of the forty-gun frigate *Artois*, Captain Pellew assumed the temporary command of that ship, and sailed two days after to cruize on the coast of Ireland. Her master was Mr. James Bowen, so highly distinguished in the battle of the 1st of June, when he was master of the fleet, and who afterwards became a retired commissioner, and rear admiral. On the 1st of July, the *Artois* fell in with a French frigate-built ship, the *Prince of Robego*, of twenty-two guns, and 180 men; and after a four hours' pursuit, and a running fight of half an hour with the chase guns, ran alongside, and took her. Captain Pellew gladly availed himself of this opportunity to show his grateful respect to the memory of his benefactor, Captain Pownoll, by giving the agency to his brother-in-law, Mr. Justice, one of the officers of Plymouth-yard: and the plea of gratitude which he offered to his own brother, was felt to be quite conclusive. Captain Macbride wished to appoint an agent of his own; but Captain Pellew asserted his right, as the actual captor, with so much temper and firmness, that the other at length gave way. He had known Captain Pellew from early childhood, having been his father's intimate friend, and quite understood his character, of which he now expressed an opinion in language less refined than emphatic.

“Confound the fellow,” said he, “if he had been bred a cobbler, he would have been first in the village.”



Peace left him without employment for the next four years. In 1783, he married Susan, daughter of J. Frowd, Esq., of Wiltshire; who survived him nearly four years. For a short time after his marriage, he lived at Truro; but when his elder brother became collector of the customs at Falmouth, he removed to the village of Flushing, which is separated from Falmouth only by a narrow creek, and which had peculiar attractions for him from family associations.



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During this period he went out in command of his brother's armed lugger, the *Hawk*, in search of a notorious outlaw, Wellard, who commanded an armed smuggler in the Channel, and who was at length killed in action with the *Hawk*, and her consort, which captured his vessel. Active occupation, indeed, was essential to his comfort, and he found a life on shore most irksome. At length, in 1786, he commissioned the *Winchelsea*, for the Newfoundland station. Among her midshipmen was the late gallant Sir Christopher Cole,[2] to whose pen the reader is indebted for the following animated sketch of his service in that frigate:—

“I joined the *Winchelsea* under Captain Edward Pellew's command in 1786, recommended to him by my brother. Captain Frank Cole, who told me, 'You are going to serve under a gallant and active officer, and one of the best seamen in the navy, who, if he live, must one day be at the head of his profession. Make a friend of him by your good conduct, and you will do well.' The *Winchelsea* was manned with good seamen, with scarcely a landsman on board; and the first lieutenant, senior master's mate, and boatswain, were all excellent practical seamen; so that the midshipmen and youngsters, to the number of nearly thirty, could not be in a better situation for obtaining a knowledge of practical seamanship. We soon found that the activity of our captain would not allow us an idle hour, and there was so much kindness of heart, and cheerfulness of manner, blended with daring exertion in the performance of his duties, that we were all happy to imitate his example to the best of our abilities. In the course of our passage to Newfoundland we encountered much blowing weather, and at all hours of the day or night, whenever there was exertion required aloft, to preserve a sail, or a mast, the captain was foremost at the work, apparently as a mere matter of amusement; and there was not a man in the ship who could equal him in personal activity. He appeared to play amongst the elements in the hardest storms, and the confidence this gave to those under his command, on many occasions, is not to be described. “The reduced peace complement of the crew made it necessary that they should work watch-and-watch, and one part of his system was, that the watch on deck, assisted by the idlers, should be in the habit of making themselves equal to every call of duty, without trespassing on the rest of those whose turn it was to be below. I remember relieving the deck one night after eight o'clock, when the captain was carrying on the duty, and shortening sail upon the quick approach of a severe gale, and being an old sailor for my age, being then sixteen, he ordered me to the mizentop, to close reef and furl the mizen-topsail; and this being done, from the increase of the gale, we had before twelve o'clock to take in successively every reef, furl most of the sails, and strike the topgallant-masts and other spars,



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to make the ship snug; the midshipmen being on the yards as well as the men, and the captain, when the gale became severe, at their elbow. In close reefing the main-topsail, there was much difficulty in clewing up the sail for the purpose of making it quiet, and the captain issued his orders accordingly from the quarter-deck, and sent us aloft. On gaining the topsail-yard, the most active and daring of our party hesitated to go upon it, as the sail was flapping about violently, making it a service of great danger. A voice was heard amidst the roaring of the gale from the extreme end of the yard-arm, calling upon us to exert ourselves to save the sail, which would otherwise beat to pieces. A man said, 'Why, that's the captain—how the —— did he get there!' The fact was, that the instant he had given us orders to go aloft, he laid down his speaking trumpet, and clambered like a cat by the rigging over the backs of the seamen, and before they reached the maintop, he was at the topmast-head, and from thence by the topsail-lift, a single rope, he reached the situation he was in. I could mention numberless instances of this kind, but will proceed to relate a few others fresh in my recollection. On our arrival at St. John's Newfoundland, we anchored in the narrow entrance in the evening; and many officers would have been satisfied to have remained there until the morning, as we could reach our anchorage only by the tedious and laborious operation of laying out anchors, and warping; but we saw that the captain was bent upon exertion, and we went heartily to work. In the course of our progress against a strong wind, the ship had been warped up to the chain rock, and it became necessary to cast off the hawser attached to it, but all the boats were employed in laying out an anchor and warps elsewhere. The captain called to the men on the forecastle, and desired 'some active fellow to go down by the hawser, and cast it off,' at the same time saying that a boat would soon be there to bring him on board again. The smartest seaman in the ship declined the attempt. In an instant the captain was seen clinging to the hawser, and proceeding to the rock; the hawser was cast off, and to the astonishment of every one, he swang himself to the side of the ship by the same means, mounted the ship's side, and was again directing the duty going on. After nine hours laborious and incessant exertion, the ship was anchored near the *Commodore* in St. John's harbour, before daylight; and as a salute had been prepared in the hope of seeing the *Commodore's* pennant before sunset on the evening before, the captain remained on deck with the gunner only to assist him. The rest of the officers and men, being excessively fatigued, had been sent below to rest; and I was not singular in being unconscious of the firing, although my hammock hung close to the open hatchway, and immediately under the deck that the guns were fired from."The strong mind and fertile



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genius of our commander kept the young mids., in particular, in constant employment. Besides that some of the number were stationed on every yard in the ship, the mizen-mast from the deck to the truck was entirely managed in the sails and rigging by the midshipmen, who were not such dandies as to despise the tar-bucket, or even volunteering the laborious task of working the oars of one of the boats in harbour. They were all emulous to leave nothing undone to make themselves practical seamen, and they all found the advantage of such examples as they had then before them, many years afterwards, at the breaking out of the revolutionary war. "In the course of this year we visited every harbour, nook, and corner, on the east coast of Newfoundland, that the ship could be squeezed into; and the seamanship displayed by the captain, in working the ship in some most difficult cases, was not lost upon the officers and crew. With respect to his personal activity, I have often heard the most active seamen, when doubting the possibility of doing what he ordered to be done, finish by saying, 'Well, he never orders us to do what he won't do himself;' and they often remarked, 'Blow high, blow low, he knows to an inch what the ship can do, and he can almost make her speak. On our return from Newfoundland, he applied to cruise after smugglers in the winter months, instead of being kept idle in harbour until the season opened for visiting Newfoundland again; but this did not come within the scope of the management of that day. In 1787, we returned to our station at Newfoundland. The summers there are very hot, and on the birthday of the good old king, George III., the 4th of June, the ship's company obtained permission to bathe. The ship was at anchor in St. John's harbour, and the captain prepared himself for the public dinner at the Governor's by dressing in his full uniform, and mounted the deck to step into his barge, which was ready to take him ashore. The gambols and antics of the men in the water caught his attention, and he stepped on one of the guns to look at them; when a lad, a servant to one of the officers, who was standing on the ship's side near to him, said, 'I'll have a good swim by-and-by, too.' 'The sooner the better,' said the captain, and tipped him into the water. He saw in an instant that the lad could not swim, and quick as thought he dashed overboard in his full dress uniform, with a rope in one hand, which he made fast to the lad, who was soon on board again, without injury, though a little frightened, but which did not prevent his soon enjoying the ludicrous finish of the captain's frolic. The lad's boasting expression gave an idea that he was a good swimmer, and I believe if ever the captain was frightened, it was when he saw the struggles in the water: but his self-possession and activity did not forsake him, and no one enjoyed the laugh against himself more than he did when the danger was over.



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“This season at Newfoundland was passed in the same course of active exertion as the former one. We sailed for Cadiz and Lisbon in October, for the purpose of receiving any remittances in bullion to England, which the British merchants might have ready on our arrival. We had light winds and fine weather after making the coast of Portugal. On one remarkably fine day, when the ship was steaming through the water under the influence of a gentle breeze, the people were all below at their dinners, and scarcely a person left on deck but officers, of whom the captain was one. Two little ship-boys had been induced, by the fineness of the weather, to run up from below the moment they had dined, and were at play on the spare anchor to leeward, which overhangs the side of the ship. One of them fell overboard, which was seen from the quarter-deck, and the order was given to luff the ship into the wind. In an instant the officers were over the side; but it was the captain who, grasping a rope firmly with one hand, let himself down to the water’s edge, and catching hold of the poor boy’s jacket as he floated past, he saved his life in as little time as I have taken to mention it. There was not a rope touched, or a sail altered in doing this, and the people below knew not of the accident until they came on deck when their dinner was over. “In every instance when a life was in danger, he was instant to peril his own for its preservation; and I could fill pages, if it were necessary to notice any but those which I was so fortunate as to witness.”

After the *Winchelsea* had been paid off in 1789, Captain Pellew was appointed to the *Salisbury*, 50, bearing the flag of Vice-Admiral Milbanke, on the Newfoundland station; in which he served till 1791. His brother Israel became the first lieutenant, and was promoted from her. While in this ship, he was one day required to decide on the case of a seaman belonging to a merchant vessel in the harbour, who came on board to complain that his captain had punished him for a theft. Finding that the captain had acted illegally, though the man had really deserved a far more severe punishment, he said to the complainant, “You have done quite right in coming here: your captain had no business to punish you as he has done, and that he may learn to be more cautious in future, we order him to be fined—a shilling!” The man turned to leave the cabin, much disappointed at the award; but how was his surprise increased, when Captain Pellew said, “Stop, sir; we must now try you for the theft.” The fact, which had been already admitted, allowed of no defence; and before the man left the ship, he was deservedly brought to the gangway.

The admiral’s secretary, Mr. Graham, afterwards the well-known police magistrate, related this circumstance to Lord Thurlow. The chancellor relaxed his iron features, and throwing himself back in his chair in a burst of laughter, exclaimed, “Well, if that is not law, it is at least justice. Captain Pellew ought to have been a judge.”



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### FOOTNOTES:

[1] This seems to require explanation, for Mr. Pellew entered the navy in 1770, only ten years before. It was the allowed practice at that time, and for many years after, for young men intended for the navy to serve by proxy. A ship's boy would be borne on the books in the name of the future midshipman, who was allowed the credit of his substitute's service, and whose time in the navy was thus running on while he was still at school. Not only so, but, by permission of the Admiralty, the time served by one boy, personally, or even thus by proxy, might, if he left the service, be transferred to the account of another! It has been stated that Mr. Pellew's eldest brother was borne on the books of the *Seaford*, till he gave up the profession of the sea for that of medicine; and while Mr. Pellew was serving in America, he wrote to his brother a letter which still exists, requesting him to procure the transfer to himself, of his nominal Service. It would therefore appear that Lord Exmouth, when a midshipman, had the three years of his elder brother's nominal service added to his own time, though his brother was never at sea.

[2] The Coles were through life intimately connected with the Pellews, to whom they were neighbours in childhood, when both families lived on the shores of the Mount's Bay; and their fortunes were very similar. Left when very young, to the care of a widowed mother, and in narrow circumstances, they all rose high by their own deserts. Two entered the church, and became, one Vice-Chancellor of the University of Oxford, the other Chaplain to Greenwich Hospital, and Chaplain-General of the Navy. Two entered the Navy, of whom Frank, the eldest, was selected to take charge of the late King William IV., when he was sent to sea as Prince William Henry. Christopher went to sea at ten years old, and became one of the first officers in the service, and not less distinguished for business habits and talents, in every post of duty. His capture of the strongly fortified island of Banda Neira, garrisoned with 1,200 soldiers, with a mere boat party of 180 men, was an exploit, perhaps, unequalled. He was in charge of two frigates and a sloop of war, and having obtained the Admiral's permission to attempt the capture, nor without a strong caution, he proposed to come upon the place unexpectedly at day-break, and, like Sir Charles Brisbane at Curacoa, lay the ships as close as possible, and storm the works under their fire. This plan was baffled by the premature discovery of the ships by the enemy. He then resolved upon a night attack with the boats, and left the ships soon after midnight with 400 men: but the wind rose and dispersed the party, and at day-break he found himself with only 180 at hand. Undismayed, he pushed ashore with his little handful of heroes, rushed up the hill to Fort Belgica, which crowned and commanded the island, mounted the walls,



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swept the ramparts like a whirlwind, followed with the panic stricken enemy through the gate of an inner fortification, and carried the fortress, and with it the island, without the loss of a man, and even without a wound. He was second in command of the naval force at the capture of Java, and directed the landing of the troops, which, by his promptitude, and wise arrangements, was effected without loss. He twice received the thanks of the Supreme Government of India for important, political services. From his sovereign he received the rank of K.C.B.; from the Admiralty, a naval medal; from Oxford, the honorary degree of D.C.L., and from the East India Company, a service of plate. He represented Glamorganshire in Parliament for twelve years; was captain of the *Royal Sovereign* yacht, and colonel of marines. He died suddenly, August 24th, 1836. It may encourage young officers whose promotion is slow, to learn that the brilliant successes of Sir Christopher Cole were preceded by thirteen years active service as midshipman and mate, and seven years as lieutenant.

### CHAPTER III.

#### THE NYMPHE AND CLEOPATRA.

Rich only in reputation, and with an increasing family, Captain Pellew felt the pressure of narrow circumstances; and with the mistake so often made by naval officers, he thought to improve them by farming. There was a moderately large farm, Trevery, within a few miles of Falmouth, which had descended in the family to his elder brother, and he proposed to cultivate this upon the principle of sharing the profits. His brother, though not very sanguine on the result, readily agreed to the experiment; and when in no long time Captain Pellew complained that he found it impossible to keep the accounts so as to make a fair division, he was allowed to rent it on his own terms. It will not occasion surprise that the undertaking was anything but profitable.

Indeed, farming is almost always a very losing employment to a gentleman, and especially to a sailor. Nothing can be more incorrect than the conclusion that education ought to excel, because ignorance succeeds; for success depends upon attention to a multiplicity of petty details, which inexperience will be likely to overlook, and talent may find it irksome to attend to. If the small farmer, who cultivates his little ground by the labour of his own family, and the more considerable one, who devotes to his estate skill, capital, and undivided attention, so often fail, what can he hope for, who depends upon labourers whose mistakes he cannot correct, and whose indolence, and even dishonesty, he is scarcely able to check? The failure of crops which depend for their success upon the knowledge and activity of the principal; and the necessary and constant outlay, which is great beyond the conception of a novice, may ruin even him who farms his own land, when the care of it is only a secondary object; and this it will generally be to a professional man.



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The expected pleasures of fanning will be likely to disappoint, even more than its profits. When the fields are waving with abundance, nothing appears more delightful than to direct the labours they require; but the enjoyments of the harvest month, when all the weary toil of preparation is forgotten, will be found a poor compensation for the daily annoyances of the year. To be excelled in management by the uneducated, and over-reached by the cunning: to study systems of agriculture, to be thwarted in carrying them into effect, and when they fail, to become an object of contemptuous pity to the ignorant but successful followers of the old routine: to find that all around take advantage of his ignorance: that servants, the best with other masters, become careless and unfaithful with him: to become involved in petty disputes with low neighbours, and to be unable to avoid them except by a forbearance which encourages aggression: to find, that with all his attention and trouble, the income lags far behind the outgoings—those are among the pleasures of a gentleman farmer.

To Captain Pellew, the employment was peculiarly unsuitable. His mind, happy only while it was active, could ill accommodate itself to pursuits which almost forbade exertion; and a business within the comprehension of a peasant was not for a character which could fill, and animate, with its own energy an extended sphere of action. Even now, when agriculture has become an eminently scientific profession, it requires to make it interesting that it shall be thoroughly understood, and conducted upon a proper scale; but at that time it was commonly a mere routine of dull drudgery, and nowhere more so than in the west of Cornwall. To have an object in view, yet be unable to advance it by any exertions of his own, was to him a source of constant irritation. He was wearied with the imperceptible growth of his crops, and complained that he made his eyes ache by watching their daily progress. He was not likely to excel in occupations so entirely uncongenial. The old people in the neighbourhood of Trevery speak with wonder of the fearlessness he displayed on different occasions, but shake their heads at his management as a farmer. They have no difficulty in accounting for his fortune. While he lived at Trevery, a swarm of bees found an entrance over the porch, of the house, and made a comb there for many successive years; and to this happy omen they attribute all his after success. The apartment is still called the “bee-room.”

The offer of a command in the Russian navy gave him an opportunity to escape from his difficulties. It was recommended to him by an officer of high character, with whom he had served, and who possessed so many claims upon his confidence that he thought it right to strengthen his own decision by the opinion of his elder brother, before he finally refused it. His brother, who had always encouraged his every ambitious, and every honourable feeling, and who, even at this



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time, confidently anticipated for him a career of high distinction, of which, indeed, his past life afforded ample promise, would not for a moment listen to his entering a foreign service. He said, that every man owes his services, blood, and life, so exclusively to his own country that he has no right to give them to another; and he desired Captain Pellew to reflect how he would answer for it to his God, if he lost his life in a cause which had no claim upon him. These high considerations of patriotism and religion are the true ground upon which the question should rest. Deeply is it to be regretted that men of high character should have unthinkingly sanctioned by their example what their own closer reflection might have led them to condemn. Still more is it to be deplored that deserving officers, hopeless, in the present state of the navy, (1834) of promotion, or employment, should be driven by their necessities to sacrifice their proudest and most cherished feelings, and to quit for a foreign flag the service of which they might become the strength and ornament. War is too dreadful a calamity to be lightly incurred. Only patriotism, with all its elevating and endearing associations of country, homes, and altars, can throw a veil over its horrors, and a glory around its achievements: patriotism, which gives to victory all its splendour; sheds lustre even on defeat; and hallows the tomb of the hero, fallen amidst the regrets and admiration of his country. But he who goes forth to fight the battles of another State, what honour can victory itself afford to him? or how shall he be excused, if he attack the allies of his own country, whom, as such, he is bound on his allegiance to respect?

The decision of Captain Pellew on this occasion proved as fortunate as it was honourable. At the beginning of 1793, there was no appearance of hostilities; and when the French republicans put to death their king, on the 21st of January, and declared war against England twelve days after, the Government, which had made no preparation for such an event, was taken by surprise almost as much as the country. The navy was on the peace establishment, with only sixteen thousand seamen and marines; and it became necessary in the course of the year to raise for it sixty thousand men. Mr. Pellew, whose situation at Falmouth enabled him to obtain the earliest information, hastened to Trevery as soon as he saw that war was likely to break out, and advised his brother immediately to offer his services to the Admiralty in person. Captain Pellew, too happy in the prospect of exchanging the ploughshare for the sword, returned with him to Falmouth; and the same night was on the road to London.

He was immediately appointed to the *Nymph*, of thirty-six guns, formerly a French frigate, which, by a striking coincidence, had been taken by boarding in the former war, after having been disabled by the loss of her wheel. He fitted her with extraordinary dispatch; but from the number of ships commissioned at the same time, there was great difficulty in manning her. Anticipating this, Captain Pellew wrote to Falmouth as soon as he had received his appointment, and adverting to the importance of getting his ship to sea quickly, he requested his brother to assist him in procuring a crew—of sailors, if possible; but if not, then of Cornish miners.



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The choice may appear extraordinary, but Cornish miners are better calculated to make seamen than any other class of landsmen; not so much because they are always accustomed to difficult climbing, and familiar with the use of ropes, and gunpowder, as that the Cornish system of mining, with an order and discipline scarcely surpassed in a ship of war, compels the lowest workman to act continually upon his own judgment. Thus it creates that combination of ready obedience, with intelligence, and promptitude at resource, which is the perfection of a sailor's character. Familiarity with danger gives the miner a cool and reflective intrepidity; and the old county sport of wrestling, so peculiarly a game of strength and skill, now falling into disuse, but then the daily amusement of every boy, was admirably calculated to promote the activity and self-possession necessary in personal conflicts.

Captain Pellew's quick discrimination is remarkably shown in thus discovering the capabilities of a class of men, who had never before been similarly tried, and with whom he could have had comparatively but little acquaintance. There were no mines in the immediate neighbourhood of anyplace where he had lived; and as his professional habits were not likely to give him an interest in the subject, he had probably never held much intercourse with miners, except when he might have met them as rioters. For at that period, the attention of the west countrymen was devoted almost exclusively to their mines and fisheries, to the neglect of agriculture; and the county being thus dependent upon importations, famine was not uncommon. At such times, the poor tinnerns would come into the towns, or wherever they had reason to believe that corn was stored, with their bags, and their money, asking only barley-bread, and offering the utmost they could give for it, but insisting that food should be found for them at a price they could afford to pay. If the law must condemn such risings, humanity would pity them for the cause, and justice must admire the forbearance displayed in them. At one of these seasons of distress, when there was a great quantity of corn in the customhouse cellars at Falmouth, a strong body of miners came in to insist that it should be sold. Mr. Pellew, the collector, met them in the street, and explained to them the circumstances under which he was entrusted with it, and which left him no power to sell. They were famishing men, and the corn was in their power; but they had come to buy, and famine itself, with the almost certainty of impunity, could not tempt them to steal. They received his explanation, and left the town peaceably.



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About eighty miners entered for the *Nymphe* and joined her at Spithead. She sailed on her passage from Spithead to Falmouth very badly manned, having not more than a dozen seamen on board, exclusive of the officers, who were obliged to go aloft to reef and furl the sails, the captain setting the example wherever anything was to be done, and often steering the ship. A corporal of marines was captain of the fore-castle. Arriving at Falmouth, after a rough passage, she soon picked up a few good men. She took a convoy from thence to the Nore, another from the Nore to Hamburg, and a third from Cuxhaven to the Nore again; never letting slip an opportunity to press as many men as could be spared from the merchant-ships. The captain would remain in a boat all night, and think himself amply repaid if he obtained only one good man. From the Nore, she returned to Spithead, and thence sailed on a cruise, in company with the *Venus*, Captain Jonathan Faulknor, having now a full proportion of good seamen, though she was still short of her complement, and none of the crew had ever seen a shot fired. She parted company with the *Venus* in chase, but rejoined her on the 29th of May. On the 27th, the *Venus* had engaged the French frigate *Semillante*, one of a squadron then cruising in the Channel under the orders of Captain Mullon, of the *Cleopatra*. The action had continued two hours, much to the disadvantage of the enemy, when the *Cleopatra* was seen coming up, and the *Venus* was obliged to fly. On the *Nymphe* rejoining her, the two frigates went in pursuit of the enemy as far as Cherbourg. Thence Captain Pellew proceeded to the North Channel, where some French cruisers were reported to have gone; but having swept the Channel without seeing anything of them, and taken on board his brother Israel, then living, a commander on half-pay, at Larne, he returned to Falmouth. Here, on the 16th of June, the *Nymphe* pressed the crew of a South-seaman, which full manned the ship.

She sailed from Falmouth on the evening of the 18th. That afternoon, Captain Pellew was informed that two French frigates had again been seen in the Channel, and he discussed with his brother Israel, at their elder brother's table, the course most likely to intercept them. After they had talked over the advantages of sailing along the English or the French coast, they at length determined to keep mid-channel.

An active and most anxious pursuit of the enemy for the last three weeks had made the crew not less eager than their commander; and the subject of the expected battle engrossed their sleeping and waking thoughts. A dream of Captain Israel Pellew had perhaps some influence on the result. His brother would not allow him to be called till they were just closing the French frigate, and meeting him as he ran on deck half dressed, he said to him, with much emotion,—“Israel, you have no business here! We are too many eggs



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from one nest. I am sorry I brought you from your wife." But Israel, whose whole attention was occupied with the enemy, exclaimed, "That's the very frigate I've been dreaming of all night! I dreamt that we shot away her wheel. We shall have her in a quarter of an hour!" His brother, who had already inferred her high state of discipline from her manoeuvres, replied, "We shall not take her so easily. See how she is handled." He was a perfect artillerist, and, prompted by the suggestions of his sleep, he took charge of a gun, made the wheel his object, and ultimately shot it away. Not less extraordinary was the dream of a master's mate, Mr. Pearse, who had served in the *Winchelsea*. He dreamt that the *Nymph* fell in with a French frigate the day after leaving port, that they killed her captain, and took her; and so vivid was the impression, that he firmly believed it to be a supernatural intimation, and spoke of it accordingly to his messmates. They rallied him immoderately on his superstition, but his confidence remained unshaken; and when his papers were examined after his death, for he was killed in the action, it was found that he had written the dream in his pocket-book.

At day break on the 19th, as they were proceeding up Channel, being still some miles to the westward of the Start, a sail was observed in the south-east, which was soon made out to be a French frigate. Before six o'clock they had approached very near, the enemy making no attempt to escape; and, indeed, if both nations had wished at this early period of the war to try the merit of their respective navies by a battle, no ship could have been better calculated than the *Cleopatra* to maintain the honour of her flag. Her commander, Captain Mullon, was deservedly considered one of the most able officers of the French marine. As Suffren's captain, he had taken a prominent part in the actions with Sir Edward Hughes in the East Indies; and the code of signals then used along the French coast was his own invention. The *Cleopatra* had been more than a year in commission, and, with such a commander, it may be supposed that her crew had been well trained to all their duties. Indeed, it was known that the enemy had taken great pains in the equipment of their cruizers; and the generally inferior description of the English crews, inevitable from the circumstance that a navy was to be commissioned at once, had led to great apprehensions for the result of the first action. The seaman-like style in which the *Cleopatra* was handled did not escape the eye of Captain Pellew; who, conscious of his own disadvantage, from the inexperience of his ship's company, determined to avail himself of the power which the enemy's gallantry afforded him, to bring the ships at once to close action, and let courage alone decide it.



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In the courage of his men he placed the firmest reliance; and when he addressed a few words to them, before they closed with the enemy, he knew how to suggest the most effectual encouragement in a situation so new to them all. To the miners, he appealed by their honour and spirit as Cornishmen; a motive which the feelings of his own bosom told him would, above all things, animate theirs. Probably there is no place where local pride prevails so strongly as in the west of Cornwall. The lower classes, employed for the most part in pursuits which require the constant exercise of observation and judgment, and familiarized to danger in their mines and fisheries, are peculiarly thoughtful and intrepid; while the distinctness of name and character which they derive from the almost insular position of their county, and the general ignorance of strangers in the interesting pursuits with which they are so familiar, have taught the lower classes to regard it less as an integral part of England, than a distinct and superior country. They have a nobler motive for this feeling, in the successes of their forefathers against the arms of the rebel parliament, when their loyalty, unwavering amidst prosperous treason, and their victories over superior discipline and numbers, obtained for them the grateful eulogy of their unfortunate sovereign. His letter remains painted, as he directed, in a conspicuous part of their older churches, a most honourable monument of their virtues and his gratitude. No man could be prouder of his county than Captain Pellew himself; and, as it was an object much coveted by the most promising of its young men to serve in his ship, and he continued steadily to patronize those who showed themselves deserving, there is scarcely a town in it from which he has not made officers. Thus his feelings were in perfect unison with theirs; and never was an appeal made with greater confidence, or answered with higher spirit, than when he reminded them of their home.

At six o'clock the ships were so near, that the captains mutually hailed. Not a shot had yet been fired. The crew of the *Nymphé* now shouted "Long live King George!" and gave three hearty cheers. Captain Mullan was then seen to address his crew briefly, holding a cap of liberty, which he waved before them. They answered with acclamations, shouting, "Vive la Republique!" as if in reply to the loyal watchword of the British crew, and to mark the opposite principles for which the battle was to be fought. The cap of liberty was then given to a sailor, who ran up the main rigging, and screwed it on the mast-head.



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At a quarter past six, the *Nymphe* reached the starboard quarter of the *Cleopatra*, when Captain Pellew, whose hat was still in his hand, raised it to his head, the preconcerted signal for the *Nymphe* to open her fire. Both frigates immediately commenced a furious cannonade, which they maintained without intermission for three quarters of an hour, running before the wind under top-gallant-sails, and very near each other. At a little before seven, the mizen-mast of the *Cleopatra* fell, and presently after her wheel was shot away. Thus rendered unmanageable, she came round with her bow to the *Nymphe*'s broadside, her jib-boom pressing hard against the mainmast. Captain Pellew, supposing that the enemy were going to board, ordered the boarders to be called, to repel them; but the disabled state of the *Cleopatra* was soon evident, and he at once gave orders to board her. Immediately the boarders rushed on the forecastle, a division of them, headed by Mr., afterwards Capt. George Bell, boarding through the main-deck ports, and fought their way along the gangways to the quarter-deck. The republicans, though much superior in numbers, could not resist the impetuosity of the attack. At ten minutes past seven they had all fled below, or submitted, and the pennant of the *Cleopatra* was hauled down.

While the boarders were pouring in upon the enemy's forecastle, the mainmast of the *Nymphe*, having been much wounded, and with the main and spring-stays shot away, was most seriously endangered by the pressure of the *Cleopatra*'s jib-boom. Fortunately, the jib-boom broke, and the *Cleopatra* fell alongside the *Nymphe*, head and stern. The mainmast was again in danger, from the *Cleopatra*'s larboard maintopmast-studding-sail boom-iron hooking in the larboard leech-rope of the main-topsail, and dragging the sail. Captain Pellew ordered some active seaman to go out upon the yard, and free the sail, promising ten guineas, if he succeeded; and a main-top-man, named Burgess, immediately sprang out, and cut the leech-rope. Lieutenant Pellowe had been already directed to drop the best bower-anchor, as a means of getting the ships apart; and by the time half the prisoners had been removed, the prize separated, and fell astern.

The crew fought with a steadiness and gallantry above all praise. A lad, who had served in the *Winchelsea* as barber's boy, was made second captain of one of the main-deck guns. The captain being killed, he succeeded to command the gun; and through the rest of the action, Captain Pellew heard him from the gangway give the word for all the successive steps of loading and pointing, as if they had been only in exercise. In the heat of action, one of the men came from the main deck to ask the captain what he must do, for that all the men at his gun were killed or wounded but himself, and he had been trying to fight it alone, but could not. Another, who had joined but the day before, was found seated on a gun-carriage, complaining that he had been very well as long as he was fighting, but that his sea sickness returned as soon as the battle was over, and that he did not know what was the matter with his leg, it smarted so much. It was found that the poor fellow had received a musket ball in it.



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The loss was severe on both sides, and, in proportion to the respective crews, nearly equal. The *Nymphe*, out of a crew of 240, had 23 killed, including her boatswain, a master's mate (Pearse), and three midshipmen; and 27 wounded, among whom were her second lieutenant, the lieutenant of marines, and two midshipmen. The *Cleopatra* lost 63 killed and wounded, out of a crew of 320. She came out of action, therefore, with 67 effective men more than her conqueror. It is highly creditable to the *Nymphe's* crew, that they beat a ship like the *Cleopatra* by gunnery, notwithstanding their inexperience; and carried her by a hand-to-hand conflict, notwithstanding their inferior numbers.

Captain Mullon was killed. A cannon-shot struck him on the back, and carried away great part of his left hip. Even at that dreadful moment he felt the importance of destroying the signals which he carried in his pocket; but in his dying agony, he took out his commission in mistake, and expired in the act of devouring it;—a trait of devoted heroism never surpassed by any officer of any nation. These signals, so valuable as long as the enemy did not know them to be in possession of the British, thus fell into the hands of Captain Pellew, who delivered them to the Admiralty.

Captain Pellew arrived at Portsmouth with his prize on the following day. He sent the flag under which she fought, and the cap of liberty, to his brother. This, the first trophy of the kind taken in the revolutionary war, is about seven inches long, made of wood, and painted red; with a round, tapering spear of brass, about three feet and a half long, the lower half being blackened, with a screw at the end to fix it on the mast. The following letter accompanied these trophies:—

“DEAR SAM,—Here we are—thank God! safe—after a glorious action with *La Cleopatre*, the crack ship of France; 40 guns, 28 on her main-deck, and 12 on her quarter-deck, some of 36 pounds, and 320 men. We dished her up in fifty minutes, boarded, and struck her colours. We have suffered much, but I was long determined to make a short affair of it. We conversed before we fired a shot, and then, God knows, hot enough it was, as you will see by the enclosed.[3] I might have wrote for a month, had I entered on the description of every gallant action, but we were all in it, heart and soul. I owe much to Israel, who undertook with the after-gun to cut off her rudder and wheel. The tiller was shot away, and four men were killed at her wheel, which I verily believe was owing to him. I will write again in a day or two, and do all I can for everybody. We must go into harbour. *Cleopatra* is fifteen feet longer, and three feet wider than *Nymphe*—much larger, Poor dear Pearse is numbered with the slain[4]—Plane and Norway slightly wounded—old Nicholls safe. God be praised for his mercy to myself, and Israel, and all of us!

“Yours, ever, E.P.”

“Be kind to Susan—go over, and comfort her; I cannot write to poor Pearse's mother for my life—do send her a note; I really cannot. I loved him, poor fellow, and he deserved it.



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"June 20, 1793."

### FOOTNOTES:

[3] A list of the killed and wounded.

[4] After the action, Mr. Norway requested permission to keep the body of Mr. Pearse for interment by his friends. Captain Pellew for answer desired Mr. N. to read the contents of a paper which he drew from his pocket. It was a direction that if he, Capt. P., should foil, his body should at once be thrown overboard. Of course Mr. N. immediately withdrew his request.

### CHAPTER IV.

#### THE WESTERN SQUADRONS.

The capture of the first frigate in a war is always an object of much interest; and the circumstances of the late action, the merit of which was enhanced by the skill and gallantry of the enemy, gave additional importance to Captain Pellew's success. "I never doubted," said Lord Howe, "that you would take a French frigate; but the manner in which you have done it, will establish an example for the war."

The brothers were introduced to the King on the 29th of June, by the Earl of Chatham, First Lord of the Admiralty; when Captain Pellew received the honour of knighthood, and his brother was made a post-captain. Besides the usual promotions, the master, Mr. Thomson, received a lieutenant's commission. As Mr. Thomson was a master of considerable standing, the captain supposed that he would decline the change to be a junior lieutenant; but the master preferred to get into the line for promotion, and as the result showed, he decided wisely, for he followed Sir Edward to the *Arethusa* and *Indefatigable*; and as he had the singular fortune to fight four brilliant actions in three years and a-half, each of which obtained promotion for his first lieutenant, Mr. Thomson thus rose rapidly to seniority, and was made a commander for the action with the *Droits de l'Homme*.

Captain Mullon was buried at Portsmouth, with all the honours due to his gallantry. One of Sir Edward's first acts was to write a letter of condolence to the widow; and as he learnt that she was left in narrow circumstances, he sent, with her husband's property, what assistance his then very limited means enabled him to offer. Madame Mullon acknowledged his attention and kindness in a most grateful letter. He received also the warm acknowledgments of the *Cleopatra's* surviving officers, the senior of whom requested and received from him testimonials of the skill and gallantry with which they had defended their ship, without which their defeat, in the bloody councils which then



prevailed, would probably have brought them to the scaffold. What was scarcely to be expected at such a time, and after a first defeat, it was admitted in the *Moniteur* that the “superb frigate” the *Cleopatra* had been taken by a frigate of equal force.



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The action between the *Nymphe* and *Cleopatra* is interesting as the first in which a ship had substituted carronades for her quarter-deck guns of small calibre, making them a material part of her force. This gun had been invented about three years before the close of the former war, and the Admiralty had allowed it to be introduced generally into the navy; but except in one ship, the *Rainbow*, 44, which was armed entirely with heavy carronades, it was considered as supplementary to the regular armament, being mounted only where long guns could not be placed, and not affecting the ship's rating. The *Flora*, when she took the *Nymphe*, in 1780, thus carried six 18-pounder carronades, in addition to her proper number of long guns; and the *Artois*, when Sir Edward commanded her, was armed in the same manner. The carronade was at first very unpopular with the sailors, generally prejudiced as they are against innovations, and who, not understanding how to use it, attributed failures which arose from their own mismanagement to defects in the invention. Sir Edward, who had no prejudices to contend with in training his crew, obtained permission, when he fitted the *Nymphe*, to exchange the six-pounders on her quarter-deck for 24-pounder carronades; and the result of the battle confirmed his favourable opinion of them. His next ship, the *Arethusa*, was armed precisely as the forty-four gun frigates at a later period of the war, with eighteen-pounders on the main-deck, and 32-pounder carronades on the quarter-deck and fore-castle. He joined her in January 1794.

Towards the end of 1793, the enemy fitted out a number of frigates, which cruised at the entrance of the Channel, chiefly in small squadrons, and committed the most serious depredations. Sir Edward formed the idea of checking them by an independent cruising squadron; but, expecting that a measure so unusual as to create a distinct command within the limits of an Admiral's station would be very strongly opposed, he would not, as an officer without influence, venture to recommend it himself; but he explained his views to Sir J. Borlase Warren, whose interest was great, and urged him to apply for such a command. The Admiralty, whose attention had already been anxiously directed to the successes of the enemy, approved of the proposal, and gave Sir John a small squadron of frigates, of which the *Arethusa* was one, and which were to rendezvous at Falmouth. Such was the origin of the Western squadrons, which, from the number of their successes, and their character of dashing enterprise, became the most popular service in the navy. As a school for officers and seamen, they were never surpassed. Almost all their captains rose to high distinction, and a list of well-known flag-officers may be traced in connection with them, such as, perhaps, was never formed by any other service of the same extent. It may suffice to mention such names as Sir Richard Strachan, Sir Israel Pellew,



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Sir Edmund Nagle, Sir Sidney Smith, Sir Richard Keats, Sir James Saumarez, Sir Philip Durham, Sir Charles V. Penrose, Admirals Barlow, and Reynolds. Nothing equals the animating duties of a cruising frigate squadron. The vigilance in hovering on the enemy's coast, or sweeping over the seas around it; the chase, by a single ship detached to observe a suspicious stranger, or by the whole squadron to overtake an enemy; the occasional action; the boat-attack;—service like this gives constant life to a sailor. In a line-of-battle ship, with the perfection of discipline, there is less demand for individual enterprise, and fewer of the opportunities which fit crews for exploits where all depends on rapidity and daring. On the other hand, a single cruiser wants the stimulus supplied by constant emulation. But in a squadron, all the ships vie with one another; and the smartest of them, herself always improving, gives an example, and a character to the whole.

In the middle of April 1794, Sir J.B. Warren sailed from Portsmouth in the *Flora*, with the *Arethusa*, *Concorde*, *Melampus*, and *Nymphe*. At daylight on the 23rd, he fell in with a French squadron off the Isle of Bass; the *Engageante*, *Pomone*, and *Resolue*, frigates; and the *Babet*, 22-gun corvette. The enemy, who were standing to the north-west, made sail on perceiving the British squadron; the Commodore in *l'Engageante* being ahead, then *Resolue*, *Pomone*, and *Babet*. Soon after, the wind shifted two points, from S.S.W. to south, giving the British the weather-gage, and preventing the enemy from making their escape to the land.

Outsailing her consorts, the *Flora* came up with the enemy at half-past six; and giving the *Babet* a passing broadside, stood on and attacked the *Pomone*. The *Pomone* was at that time by much the largest frigate ever built, being only one hundred tons smaller than a 64-gun ship, and carrying long 24-pounders on her main deck. The *Flora*, being only a 36, with 18-pounders, was a very unequal match for this powerful ship, which soon cut her sails and rigging to pieces, shot away her fore-topmast, and left her astern. The *Melampus*, which, notwithstanding her endeavours to close, was still far to windward on the *Pomone*'s quarter; now fired on her, but unavoidably at too great a distance to produce any material effect, though the heavy guns of the enemy inflicted on her a greater loss than was sustained by any other ship in the squadron. The *Arethusa*, which had previously cannonaded the *Babet*, while she was pressing on to overtake the frigates, soon came up with the *Pomone*, closed her to windward, and engaged her single-handed, and within pistol-shot, till she struck. The *Flora*, in the mean time, took possession of the corvette. A short time before the close of the action, the *Pomone* took fire, but her crew succeeded in extinguishing the flames. At half-past nine, the *Arethusa* shot away her main and mizen masts, and compelled her to surrender.



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As soon as the enemy struck, the Commodore, in the full warmth of his feelings, wrote to Sir Edward a short and expressive note:—

“MY DEAR PELLEW,—I shall ever hold myself indebted, and under infinite obligations to you, for the noble and gallant support you gave me to-day.

“God bless you and all yours!

“Your most sincere,

“And affectionate friend,

“J.B. WARREN.”

He then made signal for a general chase. Both the *Flora* and *Arethusa* were too much crippled to follow immediately, though the latter in a very short time repaired her damages sufficiently to enable her to make sail; and the *Nymphe*, to the great mortification of all on board, was so far astern from the first, that she was never able, with all their exertions, to take any part in the action. But the *Concorde*, commanded by Sir Richard Strachan, by superior sailing, came up with the *Resolue*; when the French Commodore, in *l'Engageante*, coming to assist his consort, Sir Richard brought his new opponent to close action, and took her. The *Resolue* escaped. It is remarkable that this frigate had been attacked and compelled to submit by Sir R. Strachan, in November, 1791, for resisting the search of some vessels which were carrying stores to Tippoo Saib; and that she was afterwards taken by the *Melampus*.

The squadron carried their prizes into Portsmouth. The Commodore was honoured with a red ribbon, a most unusual distinction for a service of this extent, and which he often said Sir Edward Pellew had mainly contributed to place on his shoulder. Sir J. Warren's acknowledgments were not the only flattering notice which Sir Edward received. The First Lord of the Admiralty sent him a letter, dated on the third day after the action.

“DEAR SIR,—I have but a moment to acknowledge your letter, which I have received this morning with infinite pleasure; and to say, that I am extremely happy the same success and honour attend you in the *Arethusa* as in the *Nymphe*. I shall be very glad to see you while you are refitting, as soon as your leg will permit it, and which, I am happy to hear, is only a sprain.

“I am, dear Sir,

“Your very faithful, humble servant,

“CHATHAM.”

From Lord Howe, the Commander-in-chief on the station, then just about to sail on the cruise which proved so honourable to himself and to his country, he received the following letter:—



“The *Charlotte*, St. Helen’s, 28th April, 1794.

“SIR,—I had already desired Sir John Warren, before the receipt of your favour of this day’s date, to present my congratulations on the very distinguished success which has attended your late undertaking. The superiority of the *Pomone* adds much to the credit of it; although the event has not surpassed the confidence I should have entertained of it, if I could have been apprized of the opportunity before the action commenced.

“I am much obliged by the communications which have accompanied your letter; and remain, with sentiments of particular esteem and regard,



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“Sir,  
“Your most obedient, humble servant,  
“HOWE.”

On the 23rd of August following, the squadron, now consisting of six frigates, which had sailed from Falmouth on the 7th, chased the French frigate *Volontaire*, and the corvettes *Alerte* and *Espion*, into the Bay of Audierne, a large bay immediately to the southward of Brest, having the promontory at the south entrance of that harbour, the Bec du Raz, for its northern, and Penmarck Point for its southern extremity. Four of the squadron chased the frigate on shore near the Penmarcks, where she was totally wrecked. The corvettes took shelter under the batteries, where they were driven on shore and cannonaded by the *Flora* and *Arethusa*, until their masts fell, and great part of their crews escaped to the land. The boats of the *Arethusa* were now ordered to set them on fire; but when it was found, on boarding them, that many of their wounded could not be removed with safety, Sir Edward contented himself with taking out the rest of the prisoners, leaving the wounded to the care of their friends on shore, and the stranded corvettes, which were already bilged, to their fate. *L’Espion* was afterwards got off by the enemy.

The state of the Channel was at this time very different from what it had been a few months before. The enemy’s cruisers, which then were almost in possession of it, could now scarcely leave their ports without being taken. While the frigates swept the Channel, spreading themselves to command a very extensive range of view, it was difficult for an enemy to elude their vigilance. Chasing in different directions, to take advantage of every change of wind, and to circumvent him in every manoeuvre, it was impossible for him, once seen, to escape their pursuit.

The services of the western squadron led the Admiralty to increase the force, and divide the command; and the second squadron was given to Sir Edward Pellew. On the 21st of October, at daybreak, the *Arethusa*, with the *Artois*, Captain Nagle; *Diamond*, Sir Sidney Smith; and *Galatea*, Captain Keats, fell in with the French frigate *Revolutionnaire*, eight or ten miles to the westward of Ushant, the wind being off the land. The squadron gave chase, and the Commodore took the most weatherly course, observing, that if the French captain were a seaman, the prize would fall to himself, for his only chance of escape was to carry a press of sail to windward. Instead of this, the enemy kept away; and the *Artois* overtook, and brought her to action. After they had been closely engaged for forty minutes, the *Diamond* came up; but Sir Sidney Smith, with that chivalrous feeling which marked his character, would not allow a shot to be fired, saying, that Nagle had fought his ship well, and he would not diminish the credit of his trophy. But when the enemy did not immediately surrender, he said, that she must not be allowed to do mischief, and ordered a broadside to be ready. Then, taking out his watch, he continued, “We’ll allow her five minutes: if she do not then strike, we’ll fire into her.” He stood with the watch in his hand, and just before the time expired, the French colours came down.



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Captain Nagle was deservedly knighted for his gallantry. The prize, which had been launched only six months, was 150 tons larger than any British-built frigate, and superior to any captured one, except the *Pomone*. She had a furnace for heating shot, which the enemy had used in the action. She was commissioned by the Commodore's early friend, Captain Frank Cole, and attached to the squadron. It would have added to the interest Sir Edward felt when he took possession of this very beautiful ship, could he have known that she was to close her career in the navy under his second son, at that time a child. She was taken to pieces in 1822, at Plymouth, after having been paid off by the Hon. Captain Fleetwood Pellew, who had commanded her for the preceding four years.

On the 22d of December, when Sir Edward's squadron was at anchor in Falmouth, the Channel fleet being at Spithead, and a large outward-bound convoy waiting for a fair wind at Torbay, an English gentleman, who had just escaped from L'Orient, arrived at Falmouth in a neutral vessel, and reported to Mr. Pellew, the collector of the Customs, the important fact that the Brest fleet had just been ordered to sea. He had received the information from the naval commandant at L'Orient, and a line-of-battle ship in that port, *Le Caton*, was to join the force. Sir Edward was immediately sent for by his brother, and the very important information they received appearing certain, it was deemed necessary that Sir Edward should communicate it in person to the Admiralty, and send advices from the nearest post towns on the road to the admirals at Plymouth and Portsmouth, as well as to the senior officer at Torbay. He went off express the same afternoon, accompanied by the marine officer of the *Arethusa*, afterwards Colonel Sir Richard Williams, K.C.B., late commandant of the division of marines at Portsmouth; and arrived in London on the 24th, at that time an almost unexampled despatch.[5]

The object of the French fleet in putting to sea at so unusual a season was most probably to strike a severe blow at British commerce, by intercepting the convoy from Torbay; and in this there is every reason to believe they would have succeeded, but for the timely information of their intended cruise, and the prompt measures which were taken in consequence, for the wind became fair that night. It was one of those events which so frequently occur in history, and as often in private life, where important consequences depend upon some accidental, or, to speak more properly, providential circumstance, which yet is unavailing, unless improved by judgment and energy.

When Sir Edward made his communication to the Admiralty, Earl Spencer observed, that the first step was to send advices without delay to the admirals at Plymouth and Portsmouth. "That," replied Sir Edward, "has been already attended to. I sent despatches from Exeter and Salisbury." "Then, Sir," said a junior Lord, apparently with displeasure, "you have left nothing for the Admiralty to do."—"Except," interposed Lord Spencer, "to get the British fleet to sea with as little delay as possible."



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The Board directed Sir Edward to return to Falmouth, and proceed without delay to reconnoitre Brest. During his absence, Sir J.B. Warren had arrived with his frigates; and a squadron, consisting of the *Pomone*, *Arethusa*, *Diamond*, *Galatea*, and *Concorde*, sailed from Falmouth on the 2nd of January, and arrived off Ushant on the following morning. The *Diamond*, commanded by Sir Sidney Smith, was sent a-head to reconnoitre, and the squadron followed. A line-of-battle ship was seen at anchor in Bertheaume Bay on the evening of the 4th. The *Diamond* persevered in working up through the night, and at eight next morning was seen returning to the squadron.

Sir Sidney reported that he had completely reconnoitred Brest at daylight, and ascertained that the enemy's fleet was at sea. On his return, he was under the necessity of passing very near the French seventy-four, but having disguised his ship with French colours, and a *bonnet rouge* at her head, he went boldly under the enemy's stern, and hailed her in French. She was the ship from L'Orient, *Le Caton*, which had been obliged to return to port disabled, and her pumps were going as she lay at anchor. Sir Sidney gave the name of his own ship as *La Surveillante*; and having offered assistance, which was declined, he took leave, and made sail for the squadron.

The enemy's fleet, thirty-five sail of the line, thirteen frigates, and sixteen smaller vessels, had put to sea towards the end of December. Some of them were driven back by a gale, but the fleet continued to cruise until the end of January, when they were obliged to return to port, with the loss of five ships.[6]

The squadron, having effected their principal object, arrived off Falmouth, and landed despatches on the 6th. They afterwards continued their cruise until the 22d, when they returned to port.

Sir Edward now left the *Arethusa*, and joined the *Indefatigable*, one of three 64-gun ships which had lately been cut down to heavy frigates. One part of the plan was to reduce their masts and rigging in proportion to the diminished size of their hulls. All of them proved slow and unmanageable ships; and Sir Edward, who had satisfied himself of the cause of the failure, applied to the Navy Board for permission to alter the *Indefatigable*. The Comptroller of the Navy was much offended at the request, denying that the plan of the Navy Board had failed; and when Sir Edward alluded to the notorious inefficiency of the ships, he said that it arose entirely from faulty stowage of the ballast and hold. They parted, mutually dissatisfied; and Sir Edward appealed immediately to Lord Spencer, who, a short time before, had been placed at the head of the Admiralty. This nobleman showed every desire to meet Sir Edward's wishes, but expressed very great reluctance to involve himself in a difference with the Navy Board; and requested

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him to arrange the affair, if possible, himself. He accordingly attempted it; but finding no disposition to meet his views, he at length declined the appointment, saying that he would not risk his credit by commanding a worthless ship. This brought the question to a point; and he was allowed to alter the *Indefatigable* according to his own plans. They were entirely successful, for she became an excellent sailer and a most efficient ship.

Sir Edward was remarkably accurate in judging of a ship's qualities. For this he was probably indebted in the first place to the practical knowledge of ship-building which he acquired, when he assisted to construct the squadron on Lake Champlain, and to his very close intimacy with Lieutenant (afterwards Rear-Admiral) Schanck, an enthusiast on the subject, and who always regarded him with peculiar pride and attachment, as a pupil of his own. The general knowledge which he thus obtained, could not fail to be improved in the course of his own service. Many illustrations may be given of the correctness of his opinion in this respect. The *Bordelais*, a French cruiser taken by the *Revolutionaire*, carrying 24 guns on a flush deck, 149 feet long, was bought into the service, and commissioned by Captain Manby. She was one of the fastest and most beautiful vessels ever seen, but so dangerous, that she was called, in the navy, "the coffin." Sir Edward saw her alongside the jetty at Plymouth, and pointing out to her commander the cause of her dangerous character, recommended the means of guarding against it. His advice was always acted upon, and the *Bordelais* survived; while two other captured sloops of war, the *Railleur* and *Trompeuse*, built after her model, but on a reduced scale, foundered with their crews on the same day. When the 10-gun brigs were introduced into the service, he condemned them in the strongest terms; and being asked what should be done with those already built, he replied, "Put them all together, and burn them, for they will drown their crews." His prediction has been too correctly fulfilled in the fate of these vessels, of which six were lost in the packet-service in six years and a half, with two hundred and fifty people. At a much later period, when the beautiful *Caledonia*, the most perfect ship of her class, was about to be made the victim of an experiment, he implored, but unfortunately in vain, that she might be spared.

The *Indefatigable* sailed from Falmouth on her first cruise on the 2nd of March; and in the following week, the squadron captured fifteen out of a convoy of twenty-five vessels, which had taken shelter among the rocks of the Penmarcks. On the 7th of May, she had a most narrow escape from shipwreck. The extraordinary circumstances connected with the accident, are related in the words of the late Capt. George Bell, at that time one of the officers.



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“In the summer of 1795, the *Indefatigable*, when cruising off Cape Finisterre, fell in with Admiral Waldegrave’s squadron of line-of-battle ships, and the *Concorde* frigate. The admiral made signal for the *Indefatigable* and *Concorde* to chase a small strange sail running along shore. All sail was soon set, royals, top-gallant studding-sails, &c., the wind being northerly, and the water as smooth as glass. At noon, Mr. George Bell, acting master, was in the act of crossing from the starboard gangway to the quarter-deck, to report twelve o’clock to the captain, who was looking over the larboard quarter-deck hammocks at the land, and strange sail, when he suddenly heard a rumbling noise, as if a top-sail-tie had given way, and the yard was coming down. He looked aloft, but saw nothing amiss, and then perceived that the ship was aground. Mr. Bell instantly sprang into the main-chains, and dropped the hand lead over. Only eighteen feet water was on the rock, the ship drawing nineteen and a half feet abaft. There were twelve and fourteen fathoms under the bow and stern, consequently she hung completely in the centre. Sir Edward, whose judgment in moments of danger was always so correct and decisive as never to have occasion to give a second order, immediately directed some of the main-deck guns to be moved, and the ship’s company to sally her off the rock. This fortunately succeeded. The ship fell over heavily, and started into deep water, with five feet water in her hold. Signals of distress were now made to the flag-ship, and the admiral ordered the *Indefatigable* to proceed to Lisbon to repair, and the *Concorde* to accompany us to the mouth of the Tagus. We arrived on the third day after the accident. So serious was the leak, that the men could not quit the pumps for a moment, and only a good ship’s company, such as we had, could have kept the ship afloat.

“On the evening of our arrival, the English consul sent on board a number of Portuguese, to relieve the crew. Early next morning (having the morning watch) I observed all these people leave the pumps. It was a saint’s day, and they would not work. I ran into the Captain’s cabin to state the circumstance; he in a moment came out in his dressing-gown, with a drawn sword, chased the Portuguese round the gangways and fore-castle, made them to a man lay in at the pumps, and kept them at it till the pumps sucked.

“In order to ascertain whether both sides of the ship had been injured. Sir Edward resolved to examine the bottom himself; and to the astonishment and admiration of everybody who witnessed this heroic act, he plunged into the water, thoroughly examined both sides, and satisfied himself that the starboard side only had been damaged. This saved much time and expense; for had not Sir Edward hazarded the experiment, the apparatus for heaving down must have been shifted over. The *Indefatigable* was docked on her arrival at Plymouth, early in August, and it then appeared how accurately he had described the injury. She had twenty-seven of her floors and first futtocks broke, and the Portuguese, in repairing her, had put in seventeen feet of main-keel. The frame of a regular-built frigate could not have stood the shock.



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“A few days after the submarine inspection, the gun-room officers invited Sir Edward to dinner, to commemorate the 10th of June, the *Nymphe*'s action, on board the *Principe Real*, a Portuguese 80-gun ship, used as a hulk by the *Indefatigable*'s crew, while their ship was repairing. In the evening, some of the crew took Sir Edward on their shoulders, carried him all over the hulk, and swore they would make him an admiral.”

In her next cruise, the *Indefatigable* nearly lost her gallant captain. On the 31st of August she had strong gales and squally weather, the wind flying round from W. by S. to N.E., S.E., and S.W. In the afternoon the weather moderated. The ship had been hove to under a close-reefed main-topsail, with the top-gallant yards down, the sea running very high, and the ship pitching much. It was Sunday, and the captain was at dinner with the officers, when a bustle was heard on deck. He ran instantly to the poop, and saw two men in the water, amidst the wreck of a six-oared cutter. One of the tackles had unhooked, through a heavy sea lifting the boat, and the men had jumped into her to secure it, when another sea dashed her to pieces. The captain stepped into the gig, which was carried over the stern above the cutter, and ordered it to be lowered; and though his officers urgently dissuaded him from so dangerous an attempt, he determined to hazard it. At this moment the ship made a deep plunge aft, the boat was stove, and the captain left in the water. He was much hurt, and bled profusely, for he was dashed violently against the rudder, and his nostril was torn up by the hook of one of the tackles. But his coolness and self-possession did not forsake him, and calling for a rope, he slung himself with one of the many that were thrown to him, and cheerfully ordered those on board to haul away. As soon as possible, the jolly-boat, with an officer and crew, was hoisted out from the booms, and fortunately saved the men.

This was the third time within the present year that Sir Edward had risked his life to save others. While the ship was being fitted out, he had been instrumental in saving two lives at Point Beach. Again, a short time before she sailed, and while she was lying at Spithead, the coxswain of one of the cutters fell overboard. The captain ran aft, and was instantly in the water, where he caught the man just as he was sinking. Life was apparently extinct, but happily was restored by the usual means. Perhaps no man has oftener distinguished himself in this manner; but the splendour of one act of heroism and humanity leaves all the others in the shade.



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On the 26th of January, 1796, when the *Indefatigable* was lying in Hamoaze, after having been docked, the *Dutton*, a large East Indiaman, employed in the transport service, on her way to the West Indies with part of the 2nd, or Queen's regiment, was driven into Plymouth by stress of weather. She had been out seven weeks, and had many sick on board. The gale increasing in the afternoon, it was determined to run for greater safety to Catwater; but the buoy at the extremity of the reef off Mount Batten having broke adrift, of which the pilots were not aware, she touched on the shoal, and carried away her rudder. Thus rendered unmanageable, she fell off, and grounded under the citadel, where, beating round, she lay rolling heavily with her broadside to the waves. At the second roll she threw all her masts over board together.

Sir Edward and Lady Pellew were on their way to dine with Dr. Hawker, vicar of Charles, —who had become acquainted with Mr. Pellew when they were serving together at Plymouth as surgeons to the marines, and continued through life the intimate and valued friend of all the brothers. Sir Edward noticed the crowds running to the Hoe, and having learned the cause, he sprang out of the carriage, and ran off with the rest. Arrived at the beach, he saw at once that the loss of nearly all on board, between five and six hundred, was almost inevitable. The captain had been landed on account of indisposition on the preceding day, and his absence could not fail to increase the confusion of a large and crowded transport under such appalling circumstances. The officers had succeeded in getting a hawser to the shore, by which several of the people landed; but this was a slow operation; and none but a bold and active person could avail himself of this means of escape, for the rolling of the vessel would now jerk him high in the air, and then plunge him among the breakers. Every minute was of consequence, for night was approaching, and the wreck was fast breaking up.

Sir Edward was anxious to send a message to the officers, and offered rewards to pilots, and others on the beach, to board the wreck; but when every one shrank from a service which they deemed too hazardous to be attempted, he exclaimed, "Then I will go myself." Availing himself of the hawser which communicated with the ship, he was hauled on board through the surf. The danger was greatly increased by the wreck of the masts, which had fallen towards the shore; and he received an injury on the back, which confined him to his bed for a week, in consequence of being dragged under the mainmast. But disregarding this at the time, he reached the deck, declared himself, and assumed the command. He assured the people that every one would be saved, if they attended quietly to his directions; that he would himself be the last to quit the wreck, but that he would run any one through who disobeyed him. His well-known name, with the calmness and energy he displayed, gave confidence



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to the despairing multitude. He was received with three hearty cheers, which were echoed by the thousands on shore; and his promptitude at resource soon enabled him to find and apply the means by which all might be safely landed. His officers in the mean time, though not knowing that he was on board, were exerting themselves to bring assistance from the *Indefatigable*. Mr. Pellowe, first lieutenant, left the ship in the barge, and Mr. Thompson, acting master (son of Mr. Thompson, who had been master of the *Nymphe*), in the launch; but the boats could not be brought alongside the wreck, and were obliged to run for the Barbican. A small boat belonging to a merchant vessel was more fortunate. Mr. Edsell, signal midshipman to the port admiral, and Mr. Coghlan, mate of the vessel, succeeded, at the risk of their lives, in bringing her alongside. The ends of two additional hawsers were got on shore, and Sir Edward contrived cradles to be slung upon them, with travelling ropes to pass forward and backward between the ship and the beach. Each hawser was held on shore by a number of men, who watched the rolling of the wreck, and kept the ropes tight and steady. Meantime, a cutter had with great difficulty worked out of Plymouth pool, and two large boats arrived from the dockyard, under the directions of Mr. Hemmings, the master-attendant, by whose caution and judgment they were enabled to approach the wreck, and receive the more helpless of the passengers, who were carried to the cutter. Sir Edward, with his sword drawn, directed the proceedings, and preserved order—a task the more difficult, as the soldiers had got at the spirits before he came on board, and many were drunk. The children, the women, and the sick, were the first landed. One of them was only three weeks old; and nothing in the whole transaction impressed Sir Edward more strongly than the struggle of the mother's feelings before she would entrust her infant to his care, or afforded him more pleasure than the success of his attempt to save it. Next the soldiers were got on shore; then the ship's company; and finally. Sir Edward himself, who was one of the last to leave her. Every one was saved, and presently after the wreck went to pieces.

Nothing could equal the lustre of such an action, except the modesty of him who was the hero of it. Indeed, upon all occasions, forward as he was to eulogize the merits of his followers, Sir Edward was reserved almost to a fault upon everything connected with his own services. The only notice taken of the *Dutton*, in the journal of the *Indefatigable*, is the short sentence:—"Sent two boats to the assistance of a ship on shore in the Sound;" and in his letter to Vice-Admiral Onslow, who had hoisted his flag at Plymouth a day or two before, he throws himself almost out of sight, and ascribes the chief merit to the officer who directed the boats:—



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“DEAR SIR,—I hope it happened to me this afternoon to be serviceable to the unhappy sufferers on board the *Dutton*; and I have much satisfaction in saying, that every soul in her was taken out before I left her, except the first mate, boatswain, and third mate, who attended the hauling ropes to the shore, and they eased me on shore by the hawser. It is not possible to refrain speaking in raptures of the handsome conduct of Mr. Hemmings, the master-attendant, who, at the imminent risk of his life, saved hundreds. If I had not hurt my leg, and been otherwise much bruised, I would have waited on you; but hope this will be a passable excuse.

I am, with respect,  
Sir,  
Your most obedient, humble servant,  
ED. PELLEW.”

“Thursday evening.”

The merit of services performed in the sight of thousands could not thus be disclaimed. Praise was lavished upon him from every quarter. The corporation of Plymouth voted him the freedom of the town. The merchants of Liverpool presented him with a valuable service of plate. On the 5th of March following, he was created a baronet, as Sir Edward Pellew, of Trevery, and received for an honourable augmentation of his arms, a civic wreath, a stranded ship for a crest, and the motto, “Deo adjuvante Fortuna sequatur.” This motto, so modest, and not less expressive of his own habitual feelings, was chosen by himself, in preference to one proposed, which was more personally complimentary.

Appreciating Mr. Coghlan’s services, and delighted with the judgment and gallantry he had displayed, Sir Edward offered to place him on his own quarter-deck. It is unnecessary to add that the career of this distinguished officer has been worthy his introduction to the navy.

On the 9th of March the *Indefatigable* sailed from Falmouth, with the *Revolutionaire*, *Argo*, *Amazon*, and *Concorde*. On the 21st, the *Indefatigable* gave chase to three corvettes, one of which she drove on shore, and destroyed. On the 13th of April, she fell in with the French frigate *l’Unite*, on her way from l’Orient to Rochefort, having on board, as passengers, the governor’s lady, Madame la Large, and her family. The *Revolutionaire*, which was ordered to chase in shore to cut off the enemy from the land, came up with her a little before midnight. Captain Cole hailed the French captain, and urged him repeatedly to submit to a superior force; but the enemy refusing to strike, he poured in two destructive broadsides. He was preparing to board, the frigates at the time running ten knots, when the French ship surrendered. She had suffered very severely from the fire of the *Revolutionaire*, without having been able to make any effectual return. Sir Edward sent the passengers to Brest in a neutral vessel, and

finding that one of the junior officers of the prize was a son of *Mme. la Large*, he took the young man's parole, and allowed him to accompany his mother.



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With his official communication to the Admiralty, which accompanied Captain Cole's account of the action, he wrote a private letter to the First Lord, and another to the Earl of Chatham. It was his practice through life thus to strengthen an interest for his officers in every possible quarter, and it was one, though not the only, cause of his remarkable success in obtaining promotion for so many of them. His letters on this occasion, though they display the warmth of private friendship, are not stronger than he was accustomed to write for others, whose only claim upon him was that which every deserving officer has to the patronage of his commander. The following is the letter to Lord Spencer:—

“MY LORD,—I have much pleasure in informing your Lordship of the capture of the French frigate, *l'Unite*, of thirty-eight guns, and two hundred and fifty-five men; and I have more in conveying to your Lordship my sense of Captain Cole's merit upon the occasion. Nothing could be more decided than his conduct; and his attack was made with so much vigour and judgment, that a ship of very superior force to *l'Unite* must have rewarded his gallantry. To his extreme vigilance and zeal, the squadron are indebted for this prize. It is not improper for me to say, that on all occasions I have found much reason to respect Captain Cole as a skilful and brave officer, and I rejoice in the opportunity of bearing testimony to his merit.”

To the Earl of Chatham, with whom he was intimate, he wrote in a more familiar strain:  
—

“MY DEAR LORD,—Much as I dislike breaking in upon your time, I cannot resist the pleasure of repeating to you the good fortune of my friend, Frank Cole, who was the fortunate man among us in taking *l'Unite*, alias *la Variante*. There are few things, my Lord, that could raise my friend either in your opinion or mine; but one cannot but rejoice on finding our expectations realized. “I am satisfied that nothing could be better conducted than Frank's ship upon this occasion, or courage more coolly displayed; a proof of which was strongly exhibited in his conversation with a vaunting Frenchman, boasting of his own strength, and threatening the vengeance of his partner. It will not be advancing too much when I say, that a ship of far superior force must have shared the same fate. The French commander complains bitterly of Cole's taking such advantages as his superior skill afforded him. The *Revolutionaire* is much improved since her mainmast was moved, and you will believe her, my Lord, always in good order. I have with infinite pleasure given my testimony of Frank to Lord Spencer, and I doubt not but your Lordship will give him a lift in the same quarter.”

Captain Cole, though his career had been less brilliant than that of his friend since they parted, had gained most flattering distinction. His high character



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as an officer, and his reputation for peculiar correctness of conduct, added perhaps to his more than common advantages in person and manners, had obtained for him the honour of being selected, conjointly with the late Sir Richard Keats, to have the particular charge of his late Majesty, when he first entered the navy, being made lieutenants of the watch in which the Prince was placed. He was introduced by his royal pupil to the Prince of Wales, who said of him, "They may talk of a cockpit education, and cockpit manners; but a court could not have produced more finished manners than those of your friend Captain Cole." The friendship between Sir Edward and himself had continued from their boyhood, and they had cherished for each other the affection and confidence of brothers. He died at Plymouth in 1799. A little before his death, Sir Edward, who had just returned from a cruise, came to see him for the last time. "Now," said the expiring officer, "I shall die more happy, since I have been permitted to see once again the dearest of my friends:" and when Sir Edward at length tore himself from the room, unable to control his feelings any longer, a burst of grief, on returning to the mother and sisters of Captain Cole, prevented him for a considerable time from regaining sufficient composure to quit the affecting scene.

On the morning of the 20th of April, the frigates were lying-to off the Lizard, when a large ship was seen coming in from seaward, which tacked as soon as she perceived them, and stood off without answering the private signal. The *Revolutionaire* and *Argo* were ordered by signal to proceed to port with the prize, and the others to make all sail in chase, the wind being off the land. Towards evening the *Concorde* and *Amazon* had been run out of sight, but the *Indefatigable* gained upon the chase, which made the most strenuous efforts to escape, and was manoeuvred with no common ability. She was the 40-gun frigate *Virginie*, one of the finest and fastest vessels in the French marine, and commanded by Captain Jaques Bergeret, a young-officer of the highest character and promise. The *Virginie* was one of the fleet of Villaret Joyeuse, when, ten months before, Cornwallis, with five sail of the line and two frigates, effected his justly celebrated retreat from thirty French men-of-war, of which twelve were of the line. On this occasion, Bergeret attacked the *Mars*, with a spirit and judgment which gave full earnest of his future conduct.

Finding that the British frigate outsailed her on a wind, the *Virginie* bore away; but the *Indefatigable* continued to gain on her, and at a little before midnight came up within gun-shot, and took in royals and studding-sails, having run one hundred and sixty-eight miles in fifteen hours. The *Virginie* fired her stern-chasers, occasionally yawing to bring some of her broadside guns to bear, but without material effect; and the

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two ships, still running under a press of canvass, came to action. The *Indefatigable* had only one broadside-gun more than her opponent; but her size and very heavy metal gave her an irresistible superiority. Seven of the *Virginie*'s people were killed at one of the quarter-deck guns, which struck such a panic in those around them, that it was with difficulty they could be induced to return to their quarters. Yet Bergeret fought his ship with admirable skill and gallantry, and maintained a very protracted action, constantly endeavouring to cripple the *Indefatigable*'s rigging. Sir Edward had a very narrow escape. The main-top-mast was shot away, and falling forward, it disabled the main yard, and came down on the splinter-netting directly over his head. Happily, the netting was strong enough to bear the wreck.

It was an hour and three-quarters from the commencement of the action, when, the *Virginie*'s mizen-mast and main-top-mast being shot away, the *Indefatigable* unavoidably went a-head. In addition to her former damage, she had lost her foreyard and gaff, and her rigging was so much cut that she was unable immediately to shorten sail. The *Virginie* was completely riddled. Some of the *Indefatigable*'s shot had even gone through the sail-room and out at the opposite side of the ship. She had four feet water in her hold, and more than forty of her crew were killed and wounded. Yet she attempted to rake her opponent as she was shooting a-head, and had nearly succeeded in doing so.

While the *Indefatigable* was reeving fresh braces, the other frigates came up, having been enabled to make a shorter distance by the altered course of the combatants during the chase. On their approach, the *Virginie* fired a lee-gun, and hauled down her light; and being hailed by the *Concorde*, replied, "We must surrender, there are so many of you: we strike to the frigate a-head." A more brave and skilful resistance is scarcely afforded by the annals of the war; and the officer who thus defends his ship against a very superior force may challenge more honour than would be claimed by the victor.

A boat was sent from the *Indefatigable* for the gallant prisoner, who was deeply affected at his misfortune, and wept bitterly. He inquired to whom he had struck; and being told Sir Edward Pellew, "Oh!" he exclaimed, "that is the most fortunate man that ever lived! He takes everything, and now he has taken the finest frigate in France."

Bergeret was for some time the honoured guest of Sir Edward and his family, and the British Government considered him an officer of sufficient character to be offered in exchange for Sir Sidney Smith, who had been made prisoner at Havre just before. They sent him to France on his parole, to effect this object; but his application not being successful, he returned to England. Two years after, Sir Sidney Smith escaped, and the British Government, with a feeling most honourable to themselves, set Bergeret unconditionally at liberty. Thus do the brave and good, in challenging the respect of

their enemies, contribute to soften the rigours of war, and to create a better feeling between hostile nations.



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### FOOTNOTES:

[5] A trifling incident occurred in this journey, which may, perhaps, deserve to be mentioned. In going down a hill, two or three miles beyond Axminster, both leaders fell, and the night being very cold, for the wind had set in strong from the eastward, a ring, on which he set particular value, dropped from Sir Edward's finger, as he was getting into the carriage again. He was vexed at the loss; but the road being very dirty, and the night dark, it was useless then to seek it. He therefore tore a bush from the hedge, and left it where the carriage had stopped: and ordering the post-boys to draw up at the next cottage, he knocked up the inmates, and promised them a reward if they found it. To his great pleasure, the expedient proved successful, and the ring was delivered to him on his return.

[6] The *Revolutionaire*, 110, wrecked Dec. 24, on the Mingan rock, near Brest; the *Neuf Thermidor*, 80. *Scipion*, 80, and *Superbe*, 74, foundered in a heavy gale on the 28th of January; and the *Neptune*, 74, wrecked in Audierne Bay.

### CHAPTER V.

#### EXPEDITION AGAINST IRELAND.

France, having at length obtained internal quiet, and a settled Government under the Directory, and secured the alliance of Spain and Holland, prepared for a decisive blow against Great Britain. The condition of the British empire was at that time peculiarly critical. Of her allies, some had joined the enemy, and the others had proved unequal to resist him. In the East, the most powerful of the native princes were preparing to subvert her authority. At home, Ireland was organized for rebellion; and England herself contained a strong revolutionary party, checked, indeed, by the energy of the Government, and still more by the excellent disposition of the people, but prepared to rise in formidable activity, whenever the successes of the enemy should enable them to declare themselves.

Well acquainted with all her difficulties, the French Government hastened to take advantage of them. Through the summer and autumn of 1796, a powerful fleet was equipped at Brest, to land an army on the shores of Ireland; after accomplishing which, a squadron of eight sail of the line was to be detached to India, where its support would probably encourage the hostile states to an immediate and general war. Its prospects were the more promising, as the armies of two of the native princes were officered by Frenchmen. As for Ireland, that was regarded as a country of which they had only to take possession; and the well-known feeling of a considerable part of the inhabitants warranted the most sanguine hopes of the invader.

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The history of Ireland affords a melancholy, but most instructive lesson, pre-eminent as that unhappy country has been, at once for natural and political advantages, and for misery, turbulence, and crime. A Government, to command the obedience of the people by its firmness, and their confidence by a marked consideration for their feelings and welfare; a gentry, united with them as their leaders, protectors, and friends; and a Church, winning them to a purer faith by the unobtrusive display of benefits and excellences: all these blessings might have been its own. But by fatal mismanagement, the gentry, those of them who remained, were viewed as the garrison of a conquered country by the multitude, who were taught to feel themselves a degraded caste. The Church became identified in their minds with all that they most complained of; and the faith for which they suffered was doubly endeared to them. Thus the instruments for their deliverance confirmed their thralldom, and what should have won affection aggravated their enmity.

If there were a mistake beyond all this, it was that of expecting peace from concessions extorted by violence, and calculated only to give increased power to the enemies of existing institutions. Lord Exmouth held a very decided opinion upon this point, and foresaw that strong coercive measures would become necessary in consequence. He well knew how feeble would be the restraint imposed by any conditions contemplated by the advocates of change; and in allusion to the remark of the Duke of Northumberland, who had expressed a belief that he would think differently, when he saw the securities which would accompany the concessions—"Securities!" he said, "it is all nonsense! I never yet could see them, and I never shall." He justly anticipated, that as long as anything remained to be extorted, new demands would be founded upon every new concession. "How would you like," he said to one of his officers, "to see Roman Catholic chaplains on board our ships of war?" While the question was in progress, he wrote with prophetic truth—"The times are awful, when the choice of two evils only is left, a threatened rebellion, or the surrender of our constitution, by the admission of Catholics into Parliament and all offices. I think even this will not satisfy Ireland. Ascendancy is their object. You may postpone, and by loss of character parry the evil for a short space; but not long, depend upon it. You and I may not see it, but our children will, and be obliged to meet the struggle man to man, which we may now shirk. By God alone can we be saved from such consequences; may He shed his power and grace upon us as a nation!"

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The political being everywhere dependent on the religious creed, a country where popish superstitions prevail will always contain two parties hostile upon principle to a free and constitutional government. The multitude, who have surrendered the right of private judgment upon the most engrossing subject, lose the disposition to exercise it upon matters of inferior importance; and become dangerous instruments in the hands of designing characters. A party will be found among them, whose penetration can detect the mummeries of imposture, but not perceive the claims of religion; and who, as they throw off allegiance to God, revolt at any exercise of human authority. Political privileges, the strength of a nation, where the intelligence and morals of the people support the law, will in such a country give power to rebellion, and impunity to crime. A government paternal in vigour as in kindness; the control of a firm authority, supreme over all influence, to maintain order, to leave no excuse for party, to protect the peaceable, promptly to suppress all resistance to the law, and to give to the demagogue only the alternative between obedience and rebellion, will be required not more for the safety of the state, than for the welfare of the misguided people.

When the progress of the French revolution engaged the attention of Europe, there was no country where it was regarded with greater interest than in Ireland. The Papists hoped from it the opportunity to overthrow Protestant supremacy: the Liberals hailed the triumph of their own principles. Emissaries were sent to France, who represented that nothing was wanting to secure the independence of Ireland but a regular army for a rallying point; and France, hoping to give a fatal blow to her most formidable enemy, and to gain a valuable province for herself, readily promised the aid required, and as soon as her own distracted condition would allow, hastened to fulfil her engagement.

The auxiliary force which the rebel delegates deemed sufficient, was fifteen thousand men; but an army of at least eighteen thousand was provided, commanded by that determined republican and distinguished officer, General Hoche, who had very recently succeeded in suppressing the revolt in La Vendee. Vice Admiral Villaret Joyeuse, defeated by Lord Howe on the 1st of June, was selected to command the fleet; but, a misunderstanding having arisen between him and the General, he was superseded by Vice-Admiral Morard de Galles.

The Minister of Marine, M. Truguet, whose able arrangements seemed to have anticipated and provided for every difficulty, had intended that the descent should be made in October, or at latest by the beginning of November; but the General having preferred to embark the whole army at once, it was delayed for the arrival of Rear-Admirals Pachery and Villeneuve; of whom the first, with seven sail of the line and three frigates, was waiting for an opportunity to come up from Rochefort,



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and the other was expected with five sail of the line from Toulon. The secret of the enemy's intentions was so well kept, that England had to conjecture the destination of the armament, and it was doubted to the last whether its object was Ireland, Portugal, or Gibraltar. In this uncertainty, a principal division of the Channel fleet, under Lord Bridport, remained at Spithead: Sir Roger Curtis, with a smaller force, cruised to the westward; and Vice-Admiral Sir John Colpoys was stationed off Brest, at first with ten, but afterwards with thirteen sail of the line. Sir Edward Pellew, with a small force of frigates, latterly watched the harbour.

About the middle of November, Sir R. Curtis returned to port, and soon after, M. Richery sailed from Rochefort, and entered Brest on the 11th of December. Sir E. Pellew, who had necessarily retired on his approach, immediately sent off two frigates with despatches, the *Amazon* to England, and the *Phoebe* to Sir J. Colpoys. On the 15th, he stood in with the *Indefatigable*, and though chased by a seventy-four and five frigates, stationed in Bertheaume Bay, he persisted in watching the port as usual. In the afternoon, he saw the French fleet leave the road of Brest, and immediately sent back the *Phoebe* to report the fact to the Admiral. The enemy anchored between Camaret and Bertheaume Bays, in front of the goulet, or entrance into Brest road.

Knowing how much depended on his vigilance, Sir Edward had watched Brest with the most anxious attention. The wind blew generally from the eastward, at times so strong, that the line-of-battle-ships would be under a close-reefed maintop-sail and reefed foresail; and the weather was intensely cold: yet he went every morning to the mast-head, where he would remain making his observations for a considerable part of the day, one of the older midshipmen being usually with him. "Well I remember," writes one of his officers, "that on being one day relieved to go down to my dinner, I was obliged to have some of the main-top-men to help me down the rigging, I was so benumbed with the intense cold: yet the captain was there six or seven hours at a time, without complaining, or taking any refreshment."

On the 16th, the wind being from the eastward, the French fleet, forty-four ships, of which seventeen were of the line and thirteen frigates, got finally under way, not waiting the arrival of Villeneuve. The Admiral purposed leaving Brest by the southern entrance, the Passage du Raz, between the Bec du Raz and the Saintes. By taking this course, and by so timing his departure as to clear the land just at nightfall, he hoped to elude the vigilance of the British fleet off Ushant, whose usual cruising ground was not more than six or seven leagues to leeward. But through the delays inseparable from getting a large and encumbered fleet to sea, it was four o'clock before all the ships were under sail; and as night was fast closing in, and the wind becoming variable,

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the Admiral determined not to attempt the narrow and dangerous passage he had fixed on, but to steer for the open entrance in front of the harbour, the Passage d'Iroise. Accordingly, he altered his own course, and made signal for the fleet to follow; but neither was generally observed, and the greater part of the ships, as previously directed, entered the Passage du Raz. The Admiral, therefore, sent a corvette into the midst of them, to call their attention to his own ship, which continued to fire guns, and display lights to mark the change in her course. By this time, it was quite dark, and many circumstances increased the enemy's confusion. The *Seduisant*, seventy-four, ran on the Grand Stevenet, a rock at the entrance of the Passage du Raz, where she was totally lost that night, with nearly seven hundred of her people. Her guns, and other signals, prevented those of the corvette from being attended to; and the *Indefatigable*, which kept close to the French Admiral, made his signals unintelligible to the fleet.

Sir E. Pellew had stood in that morning with the *Indefatigable* and *Revolutionaire*, and at noon came in sight of the enemy. At a quarter before five, when they had all got underway, he sent off Captain Cole to the Admiral, and remained with his own ship to observe and embarrass their movements. With a boldness which must have astonished them, accustomed though they had been to the daring manner in which he had watched their port; under easy sail, but with studding-sails ready for a start, if necessary, he kept as close as possible to the French Admiral, often within half-gun-shot; and as that officer made signals to his fleet, he falsified them by additional guns, lights, and rockets. At half-past eight, when the French ships were observed coming round the Saintes, he made sail to the north-west, with a light at each mast-head, constantly making signals for Sir J. Colpoys, by firing a gun every quarter of an hour, throwing up rockets, and burning blue lights. At midnight, having received no answer, he tacked, and stood to the southward until six o'clock. Still seeing nothing of the Admiral, though he had sailed over all his cruising ground, he sent off the *Duke of York*, hired armed lugger, to England, with despatches, intending to remain with the *Indefatigable*, and take part in the expected battle. But reflecting on the importance of conveying the information quickly to England, with the uncertainty of its being carried safely by so small a vessel; and assured that the *Revolutionaire*, which he had again spoke that morning, would not fail to meet Sir J. Colpoys, he gave up the hope of distinction to a sense of duty, and made sail for Falmouth. He arrived late in the evening of the 20th.

If Lord Bridport had been waiting at Falmouth, with discretional powers, Sir Edward having been instructed to communicate directly with him, he might have sailed early on the 21st, and found the enemy in Bantry Bay, where, perhaps, not a ship would have escaped him. It is, however, to be remembered, that as the destination of the French armament was unknown to the last, the Admiralty might very properly determine that he should receive his final instructions from themselves, and therefore would keep the fleet at Spithead for the convenience of ready communication.



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On the 25th, Lord Bridport attempted to sail. The enemy had arrived four days before, and if the weather had allowed the troops to land, the most complete naval victory would have been too late to save the country. The fleet was prevented from putting to sea on that day by a succession of accidents, by which five of the heaviest ships were disabled before they could leave the harbour. The *Prime* missed stays, and fell on board the *Sans Pareil*. The *Formidable* ran foul of the *Ville de Paris*; and the *Atlas* grounded. Four of these were three-deckers, and the other was one of the finest 80-gun ships in the service. When at length part of the fleet reached St. Helen's, a shift of wind kept the rest at Spithead; and the Admiral could not put to sea till January 3rd. The baffled enemy was then returning, and seven of his ships had actually arrived in Brest two days before the British sailed from Portsmouth to pursue them.

How Sir J. Colpoys missed the enemy may appear extraordinary. The explanation, which every circumstance tends to confirm, is, that he was restrained from attacking them by his instructions, his force being intended only for a squadron of observation: for though the enemy's fleet, as it actually sailed, would have given him an easy victory, there was always reason to believe that it was much too strong for his force. Exclusive of the five sail which were hourly expected from Toulon, there were twenty-four line-of-battle ships in Brest, and there was no reason to conclude but that the greater part, if not the whole of them, were to sail with the expedition. As the British would be so much outnumbered, Sir E. Pellew offered, in the event of a battle, to take a place in the line with the *Indefatigable*. The Admiral thanked him, but declined the offer, believing that the enemy's superiority was too great to hope for victory. When the enemy put to sea, the British fleet was eight or nine leagues to the westward of their usual cruising ground, and thus was missed, not only by the *Indefatigable*, but also by the *Revolutionaire*, which did not join with the information till the 19th. Next day, the Toulon ships were seen, and chased into port; and the Admiral, having no means of learning the course of the Brest fleet, and some of his own ships being obliged to part company, in consequence of injuries they had sustained in a gale, bore away with the remainder for Spithead.

Meantime, almost everything favoured the enemy. The two divisions of his fleet, which were separated on the evening of the 16th, by putting to sea through different passages, rejoined on the 19th, and reached their destination early on the 21st, without having met a single British cruiser. When they appeared off the Bay, a number of pilot-boats came out, supposing them to be a British fleet; and thus the French Admiral obtained pilots for his ships, and gained all the information he wanted of the British men-of-war on the coast. A line-of-battle ship and three frigates were still missing. Their absence would not have materially weakened the enemy, whose force still exceeded what the rebel delegates had required; but the two commanders had embarked in one of the missing frigates, the *Fraternite*; and Rear-Admiral Bouvet and General Grouchy, the seconds in command, could scarcely act with decision while their chiefs were hourly expected.



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The *Fraternite*, with the other three ships in company, was very near the fleet on the 20th, but it was concealed from her by a fog; and a gale which dispersed the fog, separated her from her consorts. Proceeding alone to the Bay, she had nearly reached it on the 21st, when she fell in with a British frigate, which she mistook for one of her own fleet till she was almost within gun-shot. Night saved her from capture, but the chase had carried her far to the westward, and it was eight days before she obtained a fair wind to return.

The ships continued beating up to Bearhaven against a fresh easterly breeze until the evening of the 22nd, when the Rear-Admiral anchored off the eastern extremity of Great Bear Island, with eight sail of the line, two frigates, and some smaller vessels. Seven sail of the line, and eight frigates, kept under sail; and the wind rising in the night blew them all off to sea.

It blew hard, with a heavy sea, through the next day and night. On the 24th, the weather having moderated, it was determined in a council of war to land the remaining troops immediately, and General Grouchy made a formal requisition for that purpose. A suitable landing-place was found, and the necessary preparations were completed; but it was now late in the afternoon, and the landing was necessarily deferred until morning. That night, the gale rose from the eastward, and increased through the next day to a tempest. At length the ships began to drive from their anchors. The *Indomptable*, 80, ran foul of the *Resolve* frigate, and totally dismasted her. The other frigate, the *Immortalite*, in which Rear-admiral Bouvet had embarked, though his proper flag-ship was the *Droits de l'Homme*, parted one of her cables in the evening, and was obliged to cut the other, and run out to sea. The weather would not allow her to return until the 29th, and then the Rear-Admiral, hopeless of re-assembling the fleet, decided to proceed to Brest.

Others were less fortunate. The *Tortue* frigate, two corvettes, and four transports, were taken. The *Surveillante* frigate was wrecked, and a transport foundered in the bay; and a third frigate, *l'Impatiente*, was driven on shore near Crookhaven. The sailors determined to secure for themselves alone the means of escape, leaving the troops to their fate. Where such a feeling could exist, the discipline required for their own safety was not likely to be found: and all perished but seven, who were saved chiefly by the exertions of the people on shore.

Part of the fleet, after having been blown out of the bay, steered for the *Shannon*, which had been fixed on as a rendezvous in the event of separation; but they were too few to attempt a landing, and after waiting for a short time in hope of reinforcements, they found it necessary to return.



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The *Fraternite*, with the two commanders-in-chief, continued to beat against an easterly gale till the 29th, when the wind became fair for the bay. Standing towards it, she fell in with the *Scerola*, rase, in a sinking state, with the *Revolution*, 74, engaged in taking out the people. She assisted to save them, and the two ships continued their course towards Ireland, hoping to fall in with so many of the fleet as might still enable them to make a descent. But next day, not having seen any of them, and their provisions becoming short, they steered for France. On the 8th of January, they were very near eleven of their ships, which they would presently have joined, but that they altered their course to avoid two British frigates, the *Unicorn* and *Doris*, which at the time were actually being chased by the French. Next day they again fell in with the frigates, and on the morning of the 10th they were chased by Lord Bridport's fleet, from which they narrowly escaped. On the 14th they entered Rochefort, the last of the returning ships.

Such was the fate of an expedition, in which nothing was neglected which foresight could suggest, and nothing wanting which ability could supply; whose fortune attended it until success might be deemed secure, and whose defeat was attended with circumstances too extraordinary to be referred to common causes. History records no event, not attended by direct miracle, in which God's providence is more strikingly displayed. The forces of atheism and popery had joined to overthrow a nation, the stronghold of Christian truth, and the bulwark of Protestant Europe. In this, so emphatically a holy war, no earthly arm was allowed to achieve the triumph. Human agency was put aside, and all human defences prostrated; and then, when the unresisted invader touched the object of his hope, the elements were commissioned against him. That the vigilance of a blockading force should be so eluded, and that unusual misfortunes should prevent a fleet from sailing till nothing remained for it to do; that the enemy's two commanders should be separated from their force when it sailed, and afterwards prevented, by so many well-timed casualties, from rejoining it; that when the fleet had actually arrived in the destined port, half should be blown out to sea again before they could anchor, and the rest driven from their anchors before they could land the troops; that the returning ships should be prevented from meeting their commanders; and that every disappointment should just anticipate the moment of success;—such a combination of circumstances it were folly and impiety to ascribe to anything less than the hand of God.

A victory would have saved the country, but it would not have afforded such ground for assured confidence in her future trials. This deliverance was a pledge of protection through the terrible struggle of the next twenty years; when, long disappointed in her hopes, and at length deserted by her last ally, England still maintained her good cause with a firmness more honourable to her character than even the unrivalled triumph she achieved. It remains a pledge, that amidst all dangers she may perform her duty as a Christian country, in full reliance upon God's blessing: or, should the greatness of her trials confound all human resources, that she may wait, in quietness and confidence, for God's deliverance.



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It was Sir Edward Pellew's fortune, as he had been prominent in the services connected with the sailing of this armament, to mark the return of it by a battle, the only one fought, and equally singular in its circumstances, and appalling in its result. He put to sea with the *Indefatigable* and *Amazon* on the 22nd, and supposing the enemy to have gone to the southward, cruised off Capes Ortugal and Finisterre until the 11th of January. On the 2nd, the *Amazon* carried away her main-topmast, and on the 11th, the *Indefatigable* sprung her main-topmast and topsail-yard in a squall, and was obliged to shift them. Returning towards the Channel, on the 13th of January, at a little past noon, the ships being about fifty leagues south-west of Ushant, and the wind blowing hard from the westward, with thick weather, a sail was discovered in the north-west. Sail was made in chase, and by four o'clock the stranger, at first supposed to be a frigate, as she had no poop, was clearly made out to be a French two-decker.

The enemy's ship, the *Droits de l'Homme*, commanded by Commodore, *ci-devant* Baron Lacrosse, was one of those which had proceeded to the Shannon, after having been blown out of Bantry Bay. She was the flag-ship of Rear-Admiral Bouvet, but this officer, according to a frequent practice of French admirals, had embarked in a frigate. General Humbert, who commanded one of the expeditions to Ireland in 1798, had taken his passage in her. That morning she had arrived within twenty-five leagues of Belleisle, and as the weather appeared threatening, she stood to the southward, fearing to approach nearer to the shore. Early in the afternoon she saw two large ships at a short distance to windward, probably the *Revolution* and *Fraternite*, but not waiting to ascertain their character, she made sail from them to the south-east. At half-past three she first discovered on her lee-bow the two frigates, which had observed her three hours before, and were steering a course nearly parallel to her own, to cut her off from the land.

The wind had now increased to a gale, and the sea was fast rising. At half-past four the enemy carried away her fore and main-topmasts in a heavy squall. At three-quarters past five the *Indefatigable* came up with her, and having shortened sail to close-reefed topsails, poured in a broadside as she crossed her stern. The enemy returned it from some of the upper-deck guns, and by showers of musketry from the troops, of whom there were nearly a thousand on board. So close were the ships, that some of the *Indefatigable's* people tore away the enemy's ensign, which became entangled in the mizen rigging. The *Indefatigable* then tried to pass ahead and gain a position on the enemy's bow, but the line-of-battle ship avoided this, and attempted, but without success, to lay the frigate on board, actually grazing the *Indefatigable's* spanker-boom.



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The British frigate engaged the line-of-battle ship single-handed for more than an hour, before her consort, which was several miles astern when the action commenced, could get up to assist her. At length, reaching the enemy, the *Amazon* poured a broadside into her quarter, and then, with the Commodore, maintained the engagement until about half-past seven, when the *Indefatigable* found it necessary to repair her rigging, and both frigates shot ahead.

At a little past eight, the frigates renewed the action, and placing themselves one on either bow of the *Droits de l'Homme*, raked her alternately. The seventy-four brought her guns to bear upon one or the other of her antagonists as well as she could, and occasionally attempted, but without success, to close. At half-past ten, her mizenmast was shot away, when the frigates changed their position, and attacked her on either quarter. Soon after she began to fire shells. The gale continued all night, with a very heavy sea, and the violent motion of the ships made the labour of the crews most excessive. On the main-deck of the *Indefatigable*, the men were often to the middle in water. Some of her guns broke their breechings four times; others drew the ring-bolts, and from some, the charge was obliged to be drawn after loading, in consequence of the water beating into them. But under these most trying circumstances, the crew did their duty nobly. The *Amazon*, being a smaller ship, experienced still greater difficulties than the *Indefatigable*. She emulated her consort most gallantly, and suffered a greater loss. Her masts and rigging were very much damaged; her mizen-top-mast, gaff, spanker-boom, and main-topsail-yard being entirely shot away; the main and foremast, and the fore and main yards wounded in several places by large shot; many of her shrouds, stays, and back-stays shot away, besides those which had been knotted and stoppered in the action; all her spare cordage was expended in reeving running rigging, and she had three feet water in the hold. The loss of men in both ships was remarkably small. The *Amazon* had three killed, and fifteen badly wounded; and the *Indefatigable*, though she had so long fought the seventy-four single-handed, had only her first lieutenant and eighteen men wounded; twelve of them slightly, and the two worst cases from accidents. The lower-deck guns of the enemy were nearer the water than is usual in line of-battle ships, and in consequence of the heavy sea, she could use them only occasionally. From this cause, as well as from the excellent positions maintained by the frigates, and her crippled state through the latter part of the action, she could make but a very unequal return to their fire. She suffered very much. More than a hundred of her people were killed—a severe loss, yet small compared to what it must have been, from the crowded state of her decks, and the unprecedented length of the action, if the darkness, the heavy gale, and the consequent motion of the ships, had not made the firing slow, and the aim uncertain.



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It was nearly eleven hours from the commencement of the action, when Lieutenant Bell, who was quartered on the forecastle, and who had kept the ship's reckoning through the night, satisfied himself that they were near the French coast, and ordered one or two sailors to keep a good look-out. One of these men thought he saw land, and reported it to his officer; who, perceiving it distinctly, went aft, and told the captain. Immediately the tacks were hauled on board, and the *Indefatigable* stood to the southward, after making the night-signal of danger to the *Amazon*, which, with equal promptitude, wore to the northward. The enemy, who did not yet see the danger, thought they had beaten off the frigates, and poured a broadside into the *Indefatigable*, the most destructive she had yet received. Seven shot struck her hull, the three lower-masts were wounded, and the larboard main-topmast shrouds were all cut away close to the seizings of the eyes at the mast head. It required extraordinary activity and coolness to save the topmast, the loss of which, at that time, would have made that of the ship inevitable. Under the direction of Mr. Gaze, who immediately sprang aloft, the captain of the main-top cut away the top gallant-yard; while Mr. Thompson, acting master, got up the end of a hawser, which he clinched around the mast-head. Thus they saved the main-topmast, and probably prevented the mainmast itself from being sprung. Mr. Gaze, who received a master's warrant a few weeks after, continued with Lord Exmouth to the last day of his command. He was master of the fleet in the Mediterranean, and it was he who carried the *Queen Charlotte* in such admirable style to her position at Algiers.

None at this time knew how desperate was their situation. The ships were in the Bay of Audierne, close in with the surf, with the wind blowing a heavy gale dead on the shore, and a tremendous sea rolling in. To beat off the land would have been a difficult and doubtful undertaking for the best and most perfect ship. The *Indefatigable* had four feet water in the hold, and her safety depended on her wounded spars and damaged rigging bearing the press of sail she was obliged to carry; while the crew, thus summoned to renewed exertion, were already quite worn out with fatigue. The fate of the other ships was certain; for the *Amazon* had all her principal sails disabled, and the *Droits de l'Homme* was unmanageable.

The *Indefatigable* continued standing to the southward, until the captain of the mizen-top gave the alarm of breakers on the lee-bow. The ship was immediately wore in eighteen fathoms, and she stood to the northward till half-past six, when land was again seen close a-head on the weather-bow, with breakers under the lee. Running again to the southward, she passed the *Droits de l'Homme* lying on her broadside in the surf, at the distance of about a mile, but without the possibility of giving the



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smallest assistance. Her own situation, indeed, was almost hopeless; and Sir Edward Pellew himself was deeply affected, when, having done all that seamanship could accomplish, he could only commit to a merciful Providence the lives of his gallant crew, all now depending upon one of the many accidents to the masts and rigging which there was so much reason to apprehend. Happily, the sails stood well; the *Indefatigable* continued to gain by every tack; and at eleven o'clock, with six feet water in her hold, she passed about three-quarters of a mile to windward of the Penmarcks; enabling her officers and men, after a day and night of incessant exertion, at length to rest from their toil, and to bless God for their deliverance.

She had scarcely bent new topsails and foresail, the others having been shot to pieces, when two large ships were seen at some distance a-head, crossing her course, and standing in a direction for L'Orient. One of them was at first supposed to be the *Amazon*, of which nothing had been seen since the close of the action, and the extent of whose damages was not at all suspected. The other was considered to be a French frigate, and Sir Edward gave orders to make sail in chase. But the officers represented to him, that the crew, entirely exhausted by the unparalleled length of the action, and by their subsequent labours, were quite incapable of further exertion; that their ammunition was very short, scarcely a cartridge filled, and every wad expended. Had the French frigate been alone, this would have been a subject of much regret; for she was the *Fraternite*, with the two commanders-in-chief and all the treasure of the expedition on board; but her consort was the 74-gun ship *Revolution*.

The *Amazon* struck the ground about ten minutes after she ceased firing. Her crew displayed the admirable discipline which British seamen are accustomed to maintain under such circumstances; more creditable to them, if possible, than the seamanship which saved the *Indefatigable*. From half past five until nine o'clock, they were employed in making rafts, and not a man was lost, or attempted to leave the ship, except six, who stole away the cutter from the stern, and were drowned. Captain Reynolds and his officers remained by the ship until they had safely landed, first the wounded, and afterwards every man of the crew. Of course they were made prisoners, but they were treated well, and exchanged not many months after.

Conduct like that of the *Amazon's* people in their hour of extreme danger—and it is nothing more than British seamen commonly display in the same situation—makes an Englishman proud of his country. Nor should it be forgotten, for it exalts the feeling of patriotism and honest pride, that a man-of-war's crew at that time was made up, in part, of the lowest characters in society. What, then, must be the strength and excellence of that moral feeling in England, which



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can display itself thus nobly where it would be the least expected! The fact conveys an impressive lesson; for if the intelligence, decision, and kindness, which, with few exceptions, characterize our sea-officers, can effect such happy results where they operate on the most unpromising materials, it is clear, that whatever faults the lower classes in England display must be attributed, in a great degree, to the neglect or misconduct of those, whose station in society, as it gives the power, imposes the duty to guide them.

The fate of the *Droits de l'Homme* presents an awful contrast indeed to that of the *Amazon*. She saw the land soon after the frigates hauled off, and after hopeless attempts, first to avoid it, and afterwards to anchor, she struck the ground almost at the same moment as the British frigate. The main-mast went overboard at the second shock: the fore-mast and bowsprit had fallen a few minutes before, in her attempt to keep off the land. When danger was first seen, the crew gave an alarm to the English prisoners below, of whom there were fifty-five, the crew and passengers of a letter-of-marque, which the *Droits de l'Homme* had taken a few days before: "Poor English, come up quickly; we are all lost!" Presently, the ship struck on a bank of sand, nearly opposite the town of Plouzenec. Cries of dismay were now heard from every part. Signals of distress were fired, and several of the guns hove overboard. Many of the people were soon washed away by the waves, which broke incessantly over her. At daylight the shore was seen covered with spectators, but they could afford no assistance. In the meantime, the stern was beaten in by the sea, and no provisions or water could afterwards be obtained.

At low water an attempt was made to reach the shore, but two boats which were brought alongside drifted away and were dashed to pieces on the rocks. A small raft was constructed to carry a hawser to the shore, by the aid of which it was hoped that preparations might be completed for safely landing the people. A few sailors having embarked on it, the rope was gradually slackened to allow it to drift to land; but some of these people being washed away, the rest became alarmed, cast off the hawser, and saved themselves. After a second unsuccessful attempt with a raft, a petty officer attached a cord to his body and tried to swim on shore; but he was soon exhausted, and would have perished, but that he was hauled back to the ship.

On the second day, at low water, an English captain and eight other prisoners launched a small boat, and landed safely. Their success restored confidence to the multitude, proving, as it did, how easily all might be saved, if proper means were quietly adopted. But discipline and order were wanting; and attempts made without judgment, and without concert, ended in the loss of all who made them.



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Perishing with cold, and thirst, and hunger—for the ship, her stern now broken away, no longer afforded shelter from the waves, and they had tasted nothing since she struck—the unhappy crew saw a third day arise upon their miseries. Still the gale continued, and there was no prospect of relief from the shore. It was now determined to construct a large raft, and first to send away the surviving wounded, with the women and children, in a boat which remained. But as soon as she was brought alongside, there was a general rush, and about a hundred and twenty threw themselves into her. Their weight carried down the boat; next moment an enormous wave broke upon them, and when the sea became smoother, their corpses were seen floating all around. An officer, Adjutant General Renier, attempted to swim on shore, hoping that a knowledge of their condition might enable the spectators to devise some means for their deliverance. He plunged into the sea and was lost.

“Already nearly nine hundred had perished,” says Lieutenant Pipon, an officer of the 63rd regiment, who was on board a prisoner, and who afterwards published the dreadful story.[7] “when the fourth night came with renewed terrors. Weak, distracted, and wanting everything, we envied the fate of those whose lifeless corpses no longer needed sustenance. The sense of hunger was already lost, but a parching thirst consumed our vitals. Recourse was had to wine and salt water, which only increased the want. Half a hogshead of vinegar floated up, and each had half a wine-glassful. This gave a momentary relief, yet soon left us again in the same state of dreadful thirst. Almost at the last gasp, every one was dying with misery: the ship, which was now one third shattered away from the stern, scarcely afforded a grasp to hold by, to the exhausted and helpless survivors. The fourth day brought with it a more serene sky, and the sea seemed to subside; but to behold, from fore and aft, the dying in all directions, was a sight too shocking for the feeling mind to endure. Almost lost to a sense of humanity, we no longer looked with pity on those who were the speedy fore-runners of our own fate, and a consultation took place to sacrifice some one to be food for the remainder. The die was going to be cast, when the welcome sight of a man-of-war brig renewed our hopes. A cutter speedily followed, and both anchored at a short distance from the wreck. They then sent their boats to us, and by means of large rafts, about a hundred and fifty of near four hundred who attempted it, were saved by the brig that evening. Three hundred and eighty were left to endure another night’s misery, when, dreadful to relate, above one-half were found dead next morning.”

Commodore Lacrosse, General Humbert, and three British infantry officers, prisoners, remained in the wreck till the fifth morning; and all survived: so great is the influence of moral power to sustain through extreme hardships. The prisoners were treated with the utmost kindness, and in consideration of their sufferings, and the help they had afforded in saving many lives, a cartel was fitted out by order of the French Government to send them home, without ransom or exchange. They arrived at Plymouth on the 7th of March following.



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The Admiralty awarded head-money to the frigates for the destruction of the *Droits de l'Homme*. As there were no means of knowing her complement with certainty, Sir Edward wrote to Commodore Lacrosse to request the information, telling him it was the practice of his Government to award a certain sum for every man belonging to an enemy's armed vessel taken, or destroyed. The Commodore answered, that the *Droits de l'Homme* had been neither taken nor destroyed, but that the ships had fought like three dogs till they all fell over the cliff together. Her crew, with the troops, he said, was sixteen hundred men.

The gallant captain of the *Amazon*, one of the earliest and closest friends of Sir Edward Pellew, perished at length by a not less distressing shipwreck. At the end of 1811, being then a rear-admiral, he was returning from the Baltic in the *St. George*, a ship not calculated to remain so late on such a station. After having received much damage in a former gale, she was wrecked on Christmas-day, as well as the *Defence*, which attended her to afford assistance; and only eighteen men were saved from the two line-of-battle ships. Rear-Admiral Reynolds and his captain remained at their post till they sunk under the inclemency of a northern winter; when, stretched on the quarter-deck, and hand in hand, they were frozen to death together.

FOOTNOTE:

[7] Naval Chronicle, vol. viii. p. 467.

## CHAPTER VI.

THE MUTINY.

In less than four years Sir Edward had fought as many severe actions, and the number of his successes is even less remarkable than the very small loss with which he generally obtained them. Against the *Cleopatra*, indeed, where he engaged a superior and skilful opponent with an inexperienced crew, he suffered much; but he lost only three men in taking the *Pomone*, and none in his actions with the *Virginie* and the *Droits de l'Homme*. The same impunity continued to attend him; for not a dozen were killed on board his own ships through all the rest of his life.[8] Results so uniform, and applying to so long a service, cannot be ascribed to accidental causes.

By his seamanship, his example, a strictness which suffered no duty to be neglected, and a kindness which allowed every safe indulgence, he would quickly bring a ship's company to a high state of discipline. In the language of an officer who served with him for almost thirty years—"No man ever knew better how to manage seamen. He was very attentive to their wants and habits. When he was a captain he personally directed them, and when the duty was over, he was a great promoter of dancing and other sports, such as running aloft, heaving the lead, &c., in which he was himself a great



proficient. He was steady in his discipline, and knew well the proper time to tighten or relax. He studied much the character of his men, and could soon ascertain whether a man was likely to appreciate forgiveness, or whether he could not be reclaimed without punishment. During the whole time he commanded frigates, his men had leave in port, one-third at a time, and very rarely a desertion took place.”



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His quick and correct judgment, which at once saw how an object could be attained, was seconded in the hour of trial by a decision which secured every advantage. Nothing like hesitation was seen in him. "His first order," said an officer who long served with him, "was always his last;" and he has often declared of himself that he never had a second thought worth sixpence. This would be an absurd boast from a common character, but it is an important declaration from one whose life was a career of enterprise without a failure. Always equal to the occasion, his power displayed itself the more, as danger and difficulty increased; when, rising with the emergency, his calmness, the animation of his voice and look, and the precision of his orders, would impart to the men that cool and determined energy which disarms danger, and commands success.

Not less striking was his influence in those more appalling dangers which try the firmness of a sailor more severely than the battle. The wreck of the *Dutton* is a memorable example. At a later period, during his command in India, the ship twice caught fire, and was saved chiefly by his conduct. On one of these occasions, the *Culloden* was under easy sail off the coast of Coromandel, and preparations had been made for partially caulking the ship, when a pitch-kettle, which had been heated, contrary to orders, on the fore part of the main deck, caught fire, and the people, instead of damping it out, most imprudently attempted to extinguish it with buckets of water. The steam blew the flaming pitch all around; the oakum caught fire, and the ship was immediately in a blaze. Many of the crew jumped overboard, and others were preparing to hurry out of her, when the presence and authority of the Admiral allayed the panic. He ordered to beat to quarters; the marines to fire upon any one who should attempt to leave the ship; the yard-tackles to be cut, to prevent the boats from being hoisted out; and the firemen only to take the necessary measures for extinguishing the fire. The captain, who was undressed in his cabin at the time of the disaster, received an immediate report of it from an officer, and hastened to the quarter-deck. The flames were rising in volumes from the main hatchway, but the Admiral was calmly giving his orders from the gangway, the firemen exerting themselves, and the rest of the crew at their quarters, all as quiet and orderly as if nothing had been going on but the common ship's duty.

His patronage was exerted to the utmost. The manner in which the navy was chiefly manned through the war made this one of the most delicate and responsible parts of a captain's care. The impress brought into it many whom nothing but the strictest discipline of a man-of-war would control; but many also who had entered the merchant service with the view and the prospect of rising in it, some of whom were not inferior in connections and education to the young gentlemen on the quarter-deck. Nothing could be more gratifying to a commander than to promote these, as opportunity offered, to higher stations. Some thousands of them became petty and warrant officers in the course of the war, and not a few were placed on the quarter-deck, and are found among the best officers in the service. Sir Edward brought forward many of them, and his favour has been more than justified by their conduct.



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He was particularly attentive to the junior part of his crew. A steady person was employed to teach the ship's boys, and he always had the best schoolmaster who could be obtained for the young gentlemen. It was an object much desired to be placed with him, and could he have stooped to make his reputation subservient to his interest in this respect, he might have secured many useful political connections; but this consideration never seems to have influenced him. Many of his midshipmen had no friend but himself, and rank obtained no immunities, but rather a more strict control. He once removed from his ship a young nobleman of high connections, and who afterwards became a very distinguished officer, for indulging in what many would consider the excusable frolics of youth; but to which he attached importance, because the rank of the party increased the influence of the example; nor could he be induced by the young man's friends to reconsider his determination. The Duke of Northumberland, who had himself known all the duties and hardships of service, could appreciate the impartial strictness of Sir Edward; and when he determined to send into the navy, first a young man whom he patronized, and afterwards his own son, the present Duke, he was happy to avail himself of the services of Captain Schanck, to place them with such an officer. Acting upon the same principle, he would allow neither of them more than the usual expenses of the other midshipmen. All who entered a public service, he said, whatever their rank, should have no indulgences beyond their companions. His sense of Sir Edward's conduct was shown by a warm friendship, which terminated only with his life.

In a few weeks after the action with the *Droits de l'Homme*, the mutiny broke out at Spithead, which deprived the country for a short time of the services of the Channel Fleet. The western squadrons were now of peculiar importance, for they became, in fact, the protectors of the Channel. The *Cleopatra*, commanded by the late excellent Sir Charles V. Penrose, was at Spithead when the mutiny took place; but the good disposition of his crew enabled him with admirable address to escape, and she joined Sir Edward's squadron at Falmouth. Thence she sailed with the *Indefatigable* and *Revolutionaire* on a cruise, in which all displayed extraordinary exertion, as, under such circumstances, all felt the necessity for it. One incident will mark their zeal and activity. The *Cleopatra* carried away her fore-topmast in chase, but replaced it so quickly, that she never lost sight of the privateer, which she overtook and captured. Several armed vessels were taken; and Sir Edward was careful often to run in with the squadron upon different parts of the French coast, that he might impress the belief that a considerable British force was at sea.



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Undismayed by the failure of their attempt on Ireland, the enemy were now preparing for a more formidable descent. They equipped a larger fleet than before, with a far more numerous army, over which they appointed the same able commander: and by an agreement with Holland, the Dutch fleet in the Texel, under Admiral de Winter, was to carry over a second army. This was to be commanded by General Daendels, an officer of great ability and decision. Napoleon thought very highly of him, and it was a material part of his own plan of invasion to send him with thirty thousand chosen troops to Ireland. He afterwards became Governor of Java, where he acted with an independence which awakened the jealousy of his master. Discovering this, he wrote to declare that he could hold the island against any force which France, or even England, could bring against him; but that to mark his devotedness to his emperor, he was ready to resign his command, and serve in the French army as a corporal. He was Governor of Mons during the invasion of France by the Allied armies; and he boasted to Mr. Pellew, who spent a few days with him after the peace, that an advancing army made a considerable circuit to avoid him, and that he held the fortress unmolested until Napoleon had abdicated; when he wrote to the Allied Sovereigns, asking to whom he should resign it. An invasion of Ireland, directed by generals such as Hoche and Daendels, and at a time when the British navy was in a state of mutiny, was an event justly to be dreaded; but all these mighty preparations were overturned more easily and quietly than the former. Everything was ready; and General Hoche had gone to Holland to make the final arrangements with his brother commanders, when the Legislative Assembly of France quarrelled with the Directory, and gained a temporary ascendancy. On the 16th of July, the new government displaced Vice-Admiral Truguet, the able Minister of Marine, and appointed M. Pleville le Peley his successor. With the usual madness of party, the new minister and his employer hastened to overturn all that had been done by their predecessors. They discharged the sailors, dismantled the fleet, and even sold some of the frigates and corvettes by public auction. When the Directory regained their power, September 4th, after an interval of only six weeks, they found that the preparations which had cost them so much time and treasure to complete, were utterly destroyed. In the following month, Admiral Duncan annihilated the Dutch fleet, and thus the proposed expedition was baffled at every point. Were a history of England written, with due regard to the operations of Divine Providence, in deliverances and successes effected not by human wisdom, or human strength, what cause would it afford for unbounded gratitude, and for unbounded confidence!



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While the enemy were fitting out this armament, Sir Edward was again employed to watch the harbour of Brest; a service which he performed so much to the annoyance of the French commander, that he sent a squadron to ride at single anchor in Bertheaume Bay, to prevent the frigates from reconnoitring the port. This squadron chased the *Indefatigable* and her consorts repeatedly, but without being able to bring them to action, or to drive them from their station. Once, however, a frigate narrowly escaped capture. The *Cleopatra* was becalmed close inshore, with the *Indefatigable* about two miles to seaward, and another frigate between them, when a light air rose, and freshened off the land. The French ships slipped, and bringing the breeze with them, neared the *Cleopatra*; and a frigate actually succeeded in cutting off her retreat, while a seventy-four was fast coming up. Just then, when the capture of the *Cleopatra* seemed inevitable, the *Indefatigable* made the well-known signal for a fleet, by letting fly the sheets, and firing two guns in quick succession. Ushant being on her weather-bow, the enemy naturally supposed, as was intended, that the British fleet was coming up from behind the island; and putting about immediately, hastened back to their anchorage. A similar deception is understood to have been practised successfully by *the Phaeton*, during the celebrated retreat of Cornwallis; nor is it in either case an imputation upon the enemy, that they should readily take alarm, when they knew that a British fleet was cruising near them.

Early in August, the *Indefatigable*, after a short stay in England, was again at her station off Brest; and Sir Edward, having carefully observed the port, and fully satisfied himself of the state of the French fleet, returned to Falmouth on the 14th, and, on the 26th, joined Lord Bridport at Torbay. At this time he offered to conduct an attack, which, had it been made, and with success, would have transcended the most brilliant results of naval enterprise. The weakness of the French Government, arising out of the struggle of parties for the ascendancy, seemed to offer a favourable opportunity to the royalists, with whose chiefs Sir Edward was on terms of confidential intercourse; and to assist them in their objects by an exploit which should strike terror into the republicans, he proposed to go into Brest with his frigates, and destroy the dismantled fleet. He thought it probable that he should succeed, and urged that the greatness of the object might warrant an attempt in which nothing was to be risked but a few frigates. The conception was in the highest degree daring, but there is a faith in naval affairs which works impossibilities, and it has been generally found, that the officer who can plan a bold action, has shown himself equal to accomplish it. Relative strength is almost thrown out of calculation by a well concerted and unexpected



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attack, conducted with that impetuosity which effects its object before the enemy can avail himself of his superior force. Thus, Sir Charles Brisbane, with four frigates, at Curacoa, and Sir Christopher Cole, with a few boats' crews at Banda, achieved, with little or no loss, what would have been justly deemed proud triumphs for a fleet of line-of-battle ships. Sir E. Pellew was never a man to commit himself rashly to what he had not well considered. "There is always uncertainty," he would say, "in naval actions, for a chance shot may place the best managed ship in the power of an inferior opponent." Hence he would leave nothing to chance, which foresight could possibly provide for. With such a character, and with his intimate knowledge of Brest and its defences, which were almost as familiar to him as Falmouth harbour, his own confidence affords strong presumption that he would have succeeded.

The First Lord took an opportunity to submit this proposal to Lord Bridport at Torbay, and Sir Edward was in consequence called on board the flag-ship by signal. The Admiral received him on the quarter-deck with a very low and formal bow, and referred him to Earl Spencer, in the cabin, whom he soon found not to be influenced by any arguments he could employ.

Lord Bridport was never pleased that independent frigate squadrons were appointed to cruise within his station. It was, indeed, an irregularity which nothing but the emergency could have justified, when it was desirable to relieve the commander-in-chief from lesser responsibilities, and enable him to devote all his attention to the fleet which threatened the safety of the country. Their successes had made the squadrons so popular, that the system was continued when they might, perhaps, have been placed, with equal advantage, under the orders of the Admiral; and it would naturally give pain to that officer to find himself denied the privilege of recognizing and rewarding the most brilliant services performed within his own command. Lord Bridport would occasionally evince such a feeling when speaking of the "Western Commodores," and it may have influenced his manner upon this occasion; but his approval of Sir Edward's plan was not to be expected, for he would scarcely sanction the proposal to effect with a few frigates what it would not be thought prudent to attempt with a fleet.

The *Indefatigable* sailed from Torbay with a convoy, from which she parted company on the 13th of October, off the Isle of Palma. On the 25th, near Teneriffe, a large corvette chased her, supposing her to be an Indiaman, and approached very near before she discovered the mistake. She had formerly been the frigate-built sloop *Hyaena*, which the enemy had taken very early in the war, and cut down to a flush ship; a change which improved her sailing qualities so much, that she might perhaps have escaped from the *Indefatigable*, if she had not lost her fore-topmast in carrying a press of sail. It is remarkable, that in this war Sir Edward took the first ship from the enemy, and after nearly five years, recaptured the first they had taken from the British.



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It was a part of Sir Edward's system, while he commanded cruising ships, to have the reefs shaken out, the studding sail-booms rigged out, and everything ready, before daylight; that if an enemy should be near there might be no delay in making sail. In the course of 1798 his squadron took fifteen cruisers. The circumstances connected with one of these, *La Vaillante* national corvette, taken on the 8th of August by the *Indefatigable*, after a chase of twenty-four hours, were of much interest. She was bound to Cayenne, with prisoners; among whom were twenty-five priests, who had been condemned for their principles to perish in that unhealthy colony. It may well be supposed that they were at once restored to liberty and comfort; nor would Sir Edward show to the commander of his prize the attentions which an officer in his situation expects, until he had first satisfied himself that the severe and unnecessary restraint to which they had been subjected, for he found them chained together, was the consequence of express orders from the French Government. His officers and men vied with him in attentions to the unfortunate exiles, and when he set them on shore in England he gave them a supply for their immediate wants. Among the passengers on board *La Vaillante* were the wife and family of a banished deputy. M. Rovere, who had obtained permission to join him, and were going out with all they possessed, amounting to 3,000\_l\_. Sir Edward restored to her the whole of it, and paid from his own purse the proportion which was the prize of his crew.

Early in the following year the Admiralty determined to limit the period of command in frigates. In obedience to this regulation, on the 1st of March, Sir Edward, with much regret, left the ship and crew he had so long commanded, and exchanged the activity of a cruising frigate for a service which offered little prospect of distinction. He was complimented with the *Impetueux*, formerly *L'Amerique*, one of the prizes taken by Lord Howe on the 1st of June, a most beautiful ship, and so much superior to the largest 74, that she was made a class by herself, and rated as a 78. He was allowed to select twenty men to follow him from the *Indefatigable*.

Going on board the *Impetueux* for the first time, he was accosted at the gangway by the boatswain: "I am very glad, sir, that you are come to us, for you are just the captain we want. You have the finest ship in the navy, and a crew of smart sailors, but a set of the greatest scoundrels that ever went to sea." He checked him on the spot, and afterwards, sending for him to the cabin, demanded what he meant by addressing him in that manner. The boatswain, who had served with him in the *Carleton* on Lake Champlain, pleaded former recollections in excuse; and after submitting to the reproof with which Sir Edward thought it necessary to mark his breach of discipline, informed him that the crew were all but in a state of mutiny, and that for months past he had slept with pistols under his head.



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Mutinies were the natural fruit of the system which had prevailed in the navy, and it is only wonderful that obedience had been preserved so long. All the stores were supplied by contract, and the check upon the contractor being generally inadequate, gross abuses prevailed. Officers who recollect the state of the navy during the first American war can furnish a history which may now appear incredible. The provisions were sometimes unfit for human food. Casks of meat, after having been long on board, would be found actually offensive. The biscuit, from inferior quality and a bad system of stowage, was devoured by insects,[9] until it would fall to pieces at the slightest blow; and the provisions of a more perishable nature, the cheese, butter, raisins, &c., would be in a still worse condition. Among crews thus fed, the scurvy made dreadful ravages. The *Princessa*, when she formed part of Rodney's fleet in the West Indies, sent two hundred men to the hospital at one time. The purser received certain authorized perquisites instead of pay, and one-eighth of the seamen's allowance was his right, so that their pound was only fourteen ounces. Prize-money melted away as it passed through the courts and offices. Not even public charities could escape; and the noble establishment of Greenwich was defrauded by placing in it superannuated servants, and other landsmen, as worn-out sailors, and conferring the superior appointments, intended for deserving naval officers, upon political friends. The well-known case of Captain Baillie,[10] who was removed and prosecuted for resisting some of these abuses, is a memorable, illustration.

A gradual improvement in all the departments of the public service commenced from the time of Mr. Pitt's accession to power; and the worst of these abuses had been corrected long before 1797. Still so much remained, that the demands of the seamen, when they mutinied at Spithead, were not less due to themselves than desirable for the general interests of the service. A moderate increase in their pay, and Greenwich pensions; provisions of a better quality; the substitution of trader's for purser's weight and measure; and an allowance of vegetables, instead of flour, with their fresh meat, when in port, were their chief claims. They did not resort to violent measures till petitions, irregular ones it is true, had been tried in vain. They urged their demands firmly, but most respectfully; and they declared their intention to suspend the prosecution of them if their country should require their services to meet the enemy at sea. But though their claims were most just, and their conduct in many respects was worthy to be much commended, *that* was a mistaken conclusion, and most deeply to be regretted, which made any concession to violence. Hard as the principle may appear, no grievance can be held to justify a breach of discipline; and when the sailors at Spithead had placed themselves in the position of offenders, the question of redress



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ought to have been preceded by unconditional, and, if necessary, enforced submission. It was humbling the majesty of the law to negotiate with criminals, and destroying its authority to submit to them. If the sailors had first been compelled to return to their duty, and their grievances had afterwards been properly investigated and redressed, the whole fleet would have respected the authority which enforced obedience, and received every favour with gratitude. Nor is there reason to believe that it would have been difficult to bring men to their duty, whose hearts were still sound. It is most honourable to the character of the country, that respect for the law, and obedience to the constituted authorities, are so much the habit and the principle of Englishmen, that invincible as they are in a good cause, they have always shown themselves cowards in crime. A few soldiers are sufficient to disperse the largest mob. The timely decision of an officer has seldom failed to quell the most formidable mutiny. Timorous as the men are from conscious guilt, uncertain in their plans, and doubtful of the firmness of their companions, the respect involuntarily felt for the noble bearing of a man whom they have always been accustomed to obey, and who in a good cause is standing as it were alone against a multitude, gives a commander all the power he could desire. But if he would take advantage of this feeling, he must be prompt to assert his authority. If he waver—if he allow the men once to feel their strength, and to stand committed to one another—his influence is gone. And if Government should stoop to parley with them, it sanctions their proceedings, strengthens their hands by the confession of its own weakness, and raises them from being offenders against the law, to the dignity of injured men, honourably asserting their rights. Thus, when the Lords of the Admiralty, and the first Admiral of the British navy, received on terms of courtesy criminals whose lives were forfeited, and negotiated with them as with equals—when the Government submitted to demands which it evidently feared to resist—and the Parliament hastened to legislate at the bidding of triumphant mutineers, the navy was taught a fatal lesson. The fleet at the Nore mutinied almost immediately after, without the shadow of a pretext; and the idea of mutiny once become familiar, the crews of the best ordered ships thought little of seeking redress for any real or fancied grievance by resisting the authority of their officers. Almost every ship on the home station mutinied in the course of the year; and considering how naturally the first fault leads to more guilty excesses, and how many worthless characters were swept into the navy, disgracing the service by making it the avowed punishment of crime, and corrupting it by their example, nothing can appear more natural than that mutiny should at length display itself in a darker character, and proceed in some unhappy instances to murder and treason.



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Sir Edward Pellew deeply lamented the submission of the Government. He was satisfied that a proper firmness would have quelled the present, and prevented the future evil; and he was strengthened in his opinion by the circumstances of the mutiny on board one of the ships at Spithead, in which one of his own officers was a principal actor. Captain Williams, of the marines, formerly lieutenant in the *Arethusa*, applied to his captain for authority to act, assuring him of the good disposition of his own men, and pledging himself by their means to save the ship. But his captain, though one of the bravest and best men in the service, shrank from committing the marines to a possible conflict with the sailors, and recommended a little delay. In a few minutes the marine officer returned: it was not yet too late, but not another moment could be spared. The humane feelings of the commander impelled him still to temporize, and when the marine officer returned, it was to say that his men must now save themselves, and the ship was lost. The more desperate mutiny at the Nore was not quelled by submission.

Afterwards, when mutinies were continually occurring among the ships at Plymouth. Sir Edward proposed a very decisive measure to stop the mischief. He recommended that a ship, manned with officers, and with volunteers who could be fully trusted, should attack the next that mutinied, and, if necessary, sink her in the face of the fleet. The officer who takes the first step in any measure must feel himself committed decisively to all possible consequences; but the mere display of such a resolution, with the knowledge that an officer of unflinching determination commanded the attacking ship, would most probably spare the necessity of firing a shot. Lives are commonly sacrificed only when a mistaken humanity shrinks from duty till the proper time for action has gone by. The disposition of the crews was not generally bad, but they were misled by example, and encouraged by impunity. When the *Greyhound* mutinied, and Captain Israel Pellew demanded if he had ever given them cause for dissatisfaction, if he had not always been their friend, they admitted that they had nothing to complain of, but said they must do like their friends around them. They would have landed him with every mark of respect; but he declared that, after such conduct, not one of them should ever row him again, and he hailed a waterman to put him on shore. Still, though he had reproached them in no measured terms, they manned the side, and gave him three cheers when he left the ship.

Even Sir Edward Pellew, popular as he was, and though he might well expect that a crew which had fought with him two successful actions within the past year would be too proud of their ship and commander ever to fail in their duty, yet felt it necessary to take precautions, when mutinies were occurring around him without the smallest reasonable cause. Determined to maintain his authority at all hazards, he prepared



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for the worst, and provided himself with weapons such as he deemed would be the most effectual, if he should be compelled to the dreadful necessity of a personal conflict with his crew. A pointed and two-edged blade, four inches long, was fixed in a rough buckhorn handle, with a groove for the thumb across the top. A pair of these were carried in sheaths, secured in each waistcoat-pocket. With these, a strong and active person, in the midst of a crowd where he could not use a sword, could strike right and left with terrible effect.

Once a mutiny was planned in the *Indefatigable*, but he checked it before it broke out. She was lying with the *Phoebe* in Falmouth harbour, and the frigates were to sail next morning, when the crews were determined not to proceed to their station until they had received their pay. A sailor who had overstayed his leave came in the dead of the night to inform his commander of the plot; and assured him, that though all the crew were privy to it, more than half of them would support their officers. Sir Edward professed to discredit the information, and, apparently, took no steps in consequence. But when the ship was to be got under weigh, the lieutenant complained to him that the men were sulky, and would not go round with the capstan. He then came forward, and declaring his knowledge of their intentions, drew his sword, and ordered the officers to follow his example. "You can never die so well," he said, "as on your own deck quelling a mutiny; and now, if a man hesitate to obey you, cut him down without a word." The crew, accustomed to prompt obedience, and attached to their officers, at once returned to their duty, and the *Indefatigable* was soon under sail. The *Phoebe* was earned by her crew to Cawsand Bay, and in justice to them it should be added, that although she anchored in the midst of several ships which had lately mutinied, no further irregularity took place: and after having been paid, she hastened to join the *Indefatigable* off Brest.

The crew of the *Impetueux* supposed, and probably with truth, that Sir Edward was selected to command them in consequence of their known disaffected state, his frigate having been almost the only ship on the home station which had not actually mutinied. Under this impression, a mistaken pride would not allow them to be controlled, and their secret spirit of revolt became more determined. The feeling might have worn itself out in a short time if the ship had remained at sea, for the men soon learned to respect their new commander. But when, on the 25th of April, the French fleet escaped from Brest, and sailed for the Mediterranean, the British Admiral, Lord Bridport, supposing it to have gone to Ireland, cruised for a few days off Cape Clear, and then anchored with twenty-six sail of the line in Bantry Bay. Here the bad spirits of the fleet had leisure for mischief, and facilities to communicate with one another. A general mutiny was planned, and the disgraceful distinction of setting the example was assigned to the *Impetueux*.



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On Thursday, the 30th of May, at noon, Sir Edward, being engaged to dine with Sir Alan Gardner, had gone to dress in his cabin, leaving orders with the officer of the watch to call all hands at the usual time, one watch to clear hawse, and the other two to wash decks. When the order was given, it was obeyed by all the marines, but by scarce any of the sailors. Very shortly after, signal was made to unmoor, upon which a noise of "No—no—no!" was heard from the main hatchway, and the seamen came pressing forward in great numbers; those in the rear crying, "Go on—go on!" The first lieutenant, Ross, and Lieutenant Stokes, the officer of the watch, demanded what was the matter; and after some murmuring, were told that there was a letter. The officers asked for it, that it might be given to the captain, but the cry of "No—no—no!" was immediately renewed. Lieutenant Ross then desired Lieutenant Stokes to inform the captain, upon which the mutineers shouted, "One and all—one and all!" Sir Edward instantly ran out in his dressing-gown, and found between two and three hundred on the quarter-deck. On his appearance, the clamour was increased, mingled with cries of "A boat—a boat!" He asked what was the matter, and was told they had a letter to send to Lord Bridport, complaining of tyranny, and hard usage. He demanded the letter, declaring that he would immediately carry it himself, or send an officer with it, to the Admiral; but all cried out, "No, no,—a boat of our own!" He persisted in his endeavours to pacify them as long as a hope remained of bringing them to reason, intreating them not to forfeit their character by such shameful conduct. But when some of the ringleaders declared with oaths that they *would* have a boat, and would take one, he quietly said, "You will, will you?"—gave a brief order to Captain Boys, of the marines, and sprang to the cabin for his sword. The marines, who had previously withstood every attempt of the conspirators to seduce them from their duty, now displayed that unwavering loyalty, and prompt obedience, for which, in the most trying circumstances, this valuable force has always been distinguished. Sir Edward returned instantly, determined to put to death one or more of the ringleaders on the spot, but the evident irresolution of the mutineers spared him the necessity. He immediately ordered the quarter-deck to be cleared, the marines to be posted on the after-part of the fore-castle, and the fore-part of the quarter-deck and poop, and the sentries to be doubled. The carpenter in the mean time ran to Sir Edwards cabin, and brought swords for the officers, who, at the first alarm, had hastened to place themselves by their captain's side. The mutineers, after a moment's hesitation, ran off the quarter-deck, and threw themselves down the hatchways, exclaiming to put out all lights, and remove the ladders. The officers followed them closely, and soon secured the ringleaders. Sir Edward himself seized one of the most violent, and threatening him with instant death if he resisted, dragged him up from below to the quarter-deck. The letter, an unsigned one, was now given up, and the ship's company returned quietly to their duty.



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The plot was thus entirely disconcerted; for the crews of the other ships, who knew nothing of the attempt and its failure, but waited for the example of the *Impetueux*, followed her when she obeyed the Admiral's signal. On the 1st of June, Lord Bridport, who had now learned the course taken by the French fleet, sent off Sir Alan Gardner with sixteen sail, of which the *Impetueux* was one, as a reinforcement for Earl St. Vincent in the Mediterranean. His orders on this occasion were promptly attended to; and no other attempt was made by any of the crews to resist the authority of their officers.

The *Impetueux* being now for a short time under Earl St. Vincent's command, Sir Edward took the earliest opportunity to enforce the application for a court-martial, which he had previously made to Sir Charles Cotton. The Earl, upon inquiry, was so startled at the magnitude of the plot, that he thought it better, as the mutiny had been so promptly suppressed, to conceal it altogether. Sir Edward differed from him entirely. He considered that the worst effects would follow, if the men were allowed to think that their officers feared to punish the ringleaders in such a conspiracy; and as the Earl, who was on the point of resigning the command from ill-health, appeared still reluctant, he decided the question by declaring that if the court-martial were not granted, he should immediately go on shore. Accordingly, it was held on board the *Prince*, in Port Mahon, on the 19th and 20th of June, when three of the ringleaders received sentence of death. One of them, after his condemnation, disclosed all the history and circumstances of the plot; and this, added to the consideration of his previous good character, to which Sir Edward had borne a strong testimony on the court-martial, made his captain think him a proper subject for mercy. But upon this point, Earl St. Vincent was inflexible. "I am glad of it," he said, when Sir Edward spoke favourably of the prisoner's former conduct; "those who have hitherto suffered had been so worthless before, that their fate was of little use as an example. I shall now convince the fleet that no character will save the man who is guilty of mutiny." May there never be a recurrence of such unhappy times as shall make it the duty of an officer to act upon this stern principle!

The circumstances were concealed from the country, and the rest of the fleet, as effectually as if the court-martial had never been held. The distant and retired harbour where the mutiny occurred; the quietness with which it was suppressed; the holding of the court-martial abroad; the frequency of aggravated mutinies within the preceding two years; the magnitude of the political occurrences at that period; and the anxiety felt at the movements of the enemy's fleet, probably the largest they ever had at sea, for it numbered, with the Spaniards, forty sail of the line, all concurred to prevent it from becoming an object of public attention. But Earl St. Vincent appreciated Sir Edward's conduct very highly. "Your brother," he once said to Mr. Pellew, "is an excellent and valuable officer, but the most important service he ever rendered to his country was saving the British fleet in Bantry Bay. We know that it was the intention to burn the ships, and join the rebels on shore."



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When the time arrived for executing the mutineers, it was found that preparations had been made to give to their fate the appearance of a triumph. For it strongly marks the general feeling in the navy during this unhappy period, that the individuals who thus suffered were regarded rather as martyrs than criminals. Encouraged to hardihood by his mistaken shipmates, generally excited by spirits, and some times even decorated with knots of ribbon, the mutineer went boldly to execution, leaving the spectators less appalled at his fate, than admiring his fearless bearing. Sir Edward quickly changed this feeling when the prisoners came up to the forecastle. Addressing a few words, first to the men who had followed him from the *Indefatigable*, and afterwards to the rest of the crew, "*Indefatigables*" he said, "stand aside! not one of you shall touch the rope. But *you*, who have encouraged your shipmates to the crime by which they have forfeited their lives, it shall be your punishment to hang them!" Quailing before their commander, their false feeling was destroyed in a moment; and as there is no medium between the hardihood and the cowardice of guilt, they felt as he intended, and many of them wept aloud. Afterwards, there was not in the service a more orderly ship than the *Impetueux*, or a crew more pleasant to command.

Considerate as he was upon all occasions where human life was concerned, and unwilling to resort to punishment, he was always anxious to make it as impressive as possible, whenever it became necessary to inflict it. He assisted to try one of the mutineers of the *Hermione*, whose crew had murdered their officers, and carried the ship into a Spanish port. This man's crime was attended with circumstances of peculiar aggravation. He was coxswain to Captain Pigott, who, savage tyrant as he was in general, and richly deserving of the fate he provoked, had brought him up from a boy, and treated him with much kindness and confidence. Yet he headed the murderers; and when they broke into the captain's cabin, and that officer, perceiving their intention, called for his coxswain to protect him, he replied with an opprobrious epithet, "Here I am to despatch you!" He had been entrusted with the captain's keys; and when the work of blood was over, the officers, even to unoffending midshipmen, being slaughtered, and the murderers were regaling themselves with wine, he told them that he knew where to get them better than what they were drinking. His crime was fully proved; and the court being cleared, Sir Edward proposed that sentence should be executed immediately. The circumstances of the case demanded, in his opinion, unusual severity, which might be expected to have a good effect upon the fleet; while there was every reason to conclude, from the prisoner's demeanour before them, that if delay were allowed, he would meet his fate with a hardihood which would destroy the value of the example. The court at first



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questioned their power to execute without the warrant of the Admiralty; but this was quickly settled by reference to the Act of Parliament. The President then declared that he could not make the order. "Look here!" said he, giving to Sir Edward his hand, trembling violently, and bathed in a cold perspiration. "I see it, and I respect your feelings," replied Sir Edward, "but I am sure that such an example is wanted, and I must press the point." "Well," he replied, "if it be the *unanimous* opinion of the court, it shall be done." It was agreed to, and the prisoner was called. Though, sure that he must be condemned, he entered with a bold front; but when informed that he would be executed in one hour, he rolled on the cabin-deck in an agony. "What! gentlemen," he exclaimed, "hang me directly? Will you not allow me a few days—a little time, to make my peace with God?" The whole fleet was appalled when the close of the court-martial was announced to them by the signal for execution; and at the end of the allotted hour, the wretched criminal was brought up to undergo his sentence.

A similar stern decision quelled in a few hours the spirit of resistance during the special commission for trying the Luddites at York, when the county was almost in a state of rebellion; and it was found necessary to protect the court with cannon. Six of the ringleaders having been convicted on the first day, the intrepid judge, Le Blanc, ordered them all to be hung at six o'clock next morning. While the multitudes, stunned by this unexpected vigour, waited in trembling anxiety for what was next to follow, eight more were convicted on the second day, and as promptly executed. The whole county was struck with terror; and the judge, having thus effected the great object of punishment, by compelling them to respect and fear the law, could now venture to show mercy. It is the hardest effort of human resolution for a judge to consign to certain and ignominious death the helpless being who stands trembling before him, imploring the mercy or the delay which it rests but with him to grant; but whenever justice demands life, duty requires that so great a sacrifice shall be made most useful; and to effort this, execution must take place before abhorrence for the crime is lost in pity for the offender. *His* proper time for repentance is the interval before conviction. Little dependence can be placed on the contrition which never shows itself till every hope of life is gone.

The *Impetueux* formed part of the force which pursued the combined fleets from the Mediterranean to Brest, and from which they escaped so narrowly. She afterwards remained with the Channel fleet, under Lord Bridport and Sir Alan Gardner. On the 1st of June, 1800, Earl St. Vincent, who had assumed the command a short time before, detached Sir Edward Pellew, with seven sail of the line, and some smaller vessels, to Quiberon Bay, where they were to land five thousand



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troops under General Maitland to assist the royalists. Next day, the squadron arrived and anchored; and on the 4th, the forts on the peninsula were attacked and silenced by the *Thames*, 32, with some of the small craft; and destroyed by a party of troops. Several vessels, taken at the same time, were brought off or scuttled. Very early on the morning of the 6th, the armed launches, and a division of small craft, were sent away under Lieutenant Pilford, of the *Impetueux*, which completed the destruction of the shipping in the Morbihan, bringing off six prizes, and destroying several others, among which was the *Insolente*, 16-gun brig. They landed at the same time about three hundred troops, who carried and dismantled a fort. The whole service was effected with the loss of two men killed on board the *Thames*, and one in the boats. By this time, it was placed beyond doubt that the invalids were not strong enough to warrant a descent. Sir Edward, therefore, proposed an immediate attack on Belleisle, which had long been a favourite object with him, from a conviction that nothing would enable the British to harass the enemy more effectually than the possession of that island. He earnestly combated the doubts of the General, and pressed the point with all the energy of his character. Filled with the ardour so naturally inspired by the opportunity to attempt a long-cherished enterprise, he exclaimed, "I will be everywhere at your side, only let us attack the place without delay." But the General, who could not feel that confidence founded on a knowledge of the place, which Sir Edward had gained from having long cruised in the neighbourhood; and who well knew the difficulty and loss which a much larger force had formerly experienced in taking it, objected to the attempt, and the enemy in a few days decided the question by strongly reinforcing the garrison. The troops were then landed upon the small island of Houat, about two leagues to the south-east of Quiberon Point, where they remained encamped, while Sir Edward cruised with his squadron off Port Louis.

Towards the end of July, Mr. Coghlan, who had assisted Sir Edward in saving the people from the *Dutton*, and was now commanding the *Viper* cutter, tender to the *Impetueux*, with the rank of acting lieutenant, proposed and obtained permission to cut out a brig of war, which lay moored within the port. Accordingly, with twelve volunteers from the *Impetueux*, and a midshipman and six men from the *Viper*, in the line-of-battle ship's ten-oared cutter, a boat from the *Viper*, and another from the *Amethyst* frigate, he went away on the night of the 26th to attack a national brig of seven guns, three of them long twenty-four pounders, and with eighty-seven men on board.



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The object of his attack, *La Cerbere*, was moored with springs on her cable, within pistol-shot of three batteries, surrounded with armed vessels, and not a mile from a seventy-four and a frigate. Notwithstanding her formidable position, and though her crew were prepared, while the boats of the *Amethyst* and *Viper* had not been able to keep up with the cutter, he pushed on with the single boat, and made a dash at the brig's quarter. In the act of springing on board, he became entangled in a trawl-net, and before he could disengage himself, he was pierced through the thigh with a pike, and knocked back into the boat. Still undismayed, they boarded the brig further ahead, and after a desperate struggle on her deck, carried her. Of the boat's crew, one man was killed, and eight wounded; the brig had six killed, and twenty wounded. The other boats now came up, and the prize was towed out under a heavy, but ineffectual fire from the batteries.

This very brilliant action was rewarded with peculiar notice. The squadron gave up the prize to the captors; Earl St. Vincent presented Mr. Coghlan with a sword; and a most unusual distinction, he was immediately made a lieutenant by an order in council, though, by the regulations of the service, he had still to serve a year and a half before he would be entitled to promotion.

A few days after, Sir J.B. Warren arrived, with a small squadron and a fleet of transports; and having re-embarked the troops from Houat, and taken the *Impetueux* under his orders, proceeded to attack Ferrol. The fleet arrived in the bay of Playa de Dominos on the 25th of August, and Sir James Pulteney, the military commander-in-chief, desired that the troops might be landed immediately. The direction of this service was committed to Sir Edward Pellew, who first silenced a fort of eight twenty-four pounders by the fire of the *Impetueux*, assisted by the *Brilliant*, 28-gun frigate, *Cynthia*, sloop of war, and *St. Vincent* gun-boat; and landed the whole army the same evening, without losing a man. Sixteen field-pieces were landed at the same time, and the sailors got them, with the scaling ladders, to the heights above Ferrol.

A slight skirmish took place on the first advance of the troops, and a sharper one next morning; but the enemy were effectually driven back, and the heights which command the harbour of Ferrol gained, with the loss in all of sixteen men killed, and five officers and sixty-three men wounded. Six sail of the line, two of them large first-rates, were in the harbour. Sir James now resolved to abandon the enterprise. Sir Edward entreated that he might be allowed to lead on with his sailors, for he was confident that the town must yield. But Sir James—to the intense disappointment and indignation of Sir Edward, who refused afterwards and in consequence even to meet him at dinner—declined to advance, and the troops and guns were all re-embarked without loss the same night. It was afterwards ascertained, that the garrison, despairing of effectual resistance, were prepared to surrender the keys.



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The squadron escorted the transports to Gibraltar, to join a force already assembled there; with which, under the command of Abercromby, and protected by the fleet of Lord Keith, they proceeded to Egypt.

### FOOTNOTES:

[8] Quiberon Bay, one killed in the boats; landing at Ferrol, none; Batavia Roads, one killed in the boats; Griessee, none; skirmishes off Toulon, one killed by accident; Algiers, eight.

[9] The sailors gave professional names to the various specimens of entomology which infested their stores. Thus, a large maggot found in the biscuit they called "Boscawen's bargemen."

[10] The case of Captain Baillie is remarkable as the first in which Erskine pleaded. When this brilliant advocate, then a junior, unknown even to his brethren at the bar, was assailing Lord Sandwich as the prosecutor of his client with equal eloquence and courage, and even in defiance of a rebuff from the Judge, the latter, Lord Chief Justice Mansfield, leant over the bench and inquired in a whisper, "Who is that young man?" "His name is Erskine, my lord," replied the clerk. "*His fortune is made,*" observed the Judge as he resumed his seat.

### CHAPTER VII.

#### BLOCKADE OF FERROL.—PARLIAMENTARY HISTORY.

The *Impetueux* remained with the Channel fleet until she was paid off at the end of the war, when Sir Edward was allowed a short repose. He passed it chiefly in the quiet of domestic retirement at Trefusis, a seat belonging to Lord Clinton, which occupies the promontory between the two principal branches of Falmouth harbour, and adjoins the little town of Flushing, where his grandfather had lived. Here, in the bosom of his family, and with many of his companions and friends in the service around him, he enjoyed his first period of relaxation from the beginning of the revolutionary war.

Early in 1801, there was a naval promotion, which left him nearly at the head of the post list; and he was shortly after made a Colonel of Marines. His popularity was now very great, for the credit gained by his first action was increased by every future success, until there was no officer of his rank whose name was more known and honoured through the country. That this should create jealousy was only to be expected; for it is always the hardest trial of liberality to be just to the superior fortunes of a competitor. Some, contending that he enjoyed a reputation beyond his deserts, would under-rate his services, which, they said, any other officer with the same chances could have



performed as well. But chance, though it may afford an occasional instance of unexpected fortune, never gives a long and uniform career of distinction. Sir Edward displayed the same character through all his grades of rank, and, except in the *Hazard*, which was employed on a station and a service which could afford no opportunity for distinction, obtained the same success in every ship he commanded. It is encouraging to unassisted merit to observe, that he had no influential friends until he had made himself independent of their support, and was attached to the fortunes of no leading commander. All his promotions, and every honour he received, were given expressly to reward some recent and distinguished service.



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Many years after he had retired from active employment, he made a modest allusion to this subject at a naval dinner, at which his late Majesty, then Lord High Admiral, presided. In rising to return thanks, when his health was drunk with compliments which demanded acknowledgment, he referred to his own history as a proof that no officer, however unsupported by influence, need despair of receiving his due reward from the justice and gratitude of his country. "I have never known," he said, "what fortune meant. I never chose my station, and never had a friend but the King's pennant; but I have always gone where I was sent, and done what I was ordered; and he who will act upon the same principles, may do as I have done."

At the general election in 1802, he was solicited to stand for Barnstaple; for which, after a severe contest, he was returned on the 8th of July, by a very large majority. His correspondence at this period shows he was very early wearied with his situation. Nor was he better satisfied when he had gained an insight into the nature of a parliamentary life. Indeed, a naval officer of reputation will seldom promote his comfort by going into Parliament; where his inactivity may present an unfavourable contrast to his professional character, or his prominence expose him to the virulence of party. Yet the experience thus obtained was not without value to a man who was henceforth to be employed as a commander-in-chief, with a greater share of political responsibility than usually attaches to a naval command. If he had wished to estimate the value of political friendships, and the spirit of party intrigue, a lesson which professional employment at sea is little calculated to teach, he could not have entered Parliament at a better season. The high character and truly English politics of Mr. Pitt had united very different parties to support him in carrying on a just and necessary war; but when the bond which he had afforded to his party was removed by his going out of office, and peace had deprived them of their common object, former principles of repulsion regained their influence; and the uncertainty whether the premier was the rival or the *locum tenens* of Pitt increased the confusion. It was still more embarrassing when, at a later period, Mr. Pitt threw himself into avowed opposition to a government, of which the premier was his friend and pupil, and the other ministers, one of whom was his own brother, might all be regarded as his nominees. Indeed, six remained in office when he returned to power, and the ex-premier himself joined the administration in a few months after.

Sir Edward had not long been in Parliament, before he expressed a confident opinion that Mr. Pitt would soon come in. Succeeding events strengthened this conviction; and when the peace, or rather armed truce, of Amiens was evidently drawing to a close, he said in one of his letters, "Pitt *must* now be the minister." He gave a general support to the Government in the very small part which he took in the business of the House, but he availed himself of the earliest opportunity to escape from it; and on the very day when the King's message was delivered, which indicated the renewal of hostilities, he solicited and obtained employment.



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On the 11th of March, 1803, he was appointed to the eighty-gun ship *Tonnant*, in which, after some delay, occasioned by the general difficulty of procuring men, he joined the Channel fleet. Anxious to take part in the important naval operations to be expected, he wished to sail with Nelson, whose reputation gave a just presage that the most decisive blow would be struck where he commanded; but after he had been appointed to a station, his sense of naval obedience forbade any attempt to change it. With that care for the improvement of his young officers which was always a prominent feature of his conduct, he advertised for a superior schoolmaster for the *Tonnant*, to whom he offered 50\_l\_ per annum, in addition to his pay, that he might obtain for them better instructions than the regulations of the service would afford.

Early in the summer, he was detached from the Channel fleet, with the *Mars* and *Spartiate* under his orders, to intercept or blockade a Dutch squadron, which had put into the neutral port of Ferrol, on their passage to India. The enemy had proceeded on their voyage the day before he arrived, and he followed under a press of sail as far as Madeira. They were the ships which he afterwards destroyed at Griessee. In his absence, a French squadron of five sail of the line arrived at Corunna from St. Domingo, and took advantage of the first westerly gale to cross the bay to Ferrol. Here they were blockaded by Sir Edward, whose force was soon increased to six, and afterwards to eight sail of the line.

On the 2nd of September, during a strong easterly gale, with thick weather, two other French ships from St. Domingo, the *Duguay Tronin* 74, and *Guerriere* frigate, were chased by Sir Robert Calder, who was coming out to relieve the Commodore. The *Culloden* had a running fight with the enemy for two hours and a half, but could not prevent them from getting into Corunna. In autumn, the *Tonnant* having been refitted at Plymouth, Sir Edward resumed the command, and maintained a very close blockade, at considerable risk, by night and day. He constantly expected a French force from Brest, and often remarked to his officers, that they would have to fight both squadrons at once. Under such circumstances, every precaution was required, and though unwilling to interfere with the men's rest, yet, to prevent surprise, he thought it necessary to keep them at quarters all night, and pipe down the hammocks in the morning.

As the season advanced, the weather became so tempestuous that the squadron was often driven off the land for many days together, and only occasionally fetched near Ferrol. Sir Edward became anxious therefore to find an anchorage in the neighbourhood, where the fleet could ride out a gale, and obtain necessary supplies. He first examined a bay near Cape Ortugal, but this was too distant. He then went in a cutter into the Bay of Bentancos, between Ferrol and Corunna,



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on the eastern side of which, in a bay called Ares, he considered, contrary to the opinion of the celebrated Spanish hydrographer Tofino, that the anchorage was safe, and the ground good. The correctness of his judgment was proved by the number of heavy gales which the squadron rode out through the winter. The place much resembles Cawsand Bay, and a windmill stood on the adjacent height, from which the harbour of Ferrol could be seen as distinctly as Hamoaze from Maker Tower. In this mill, the English and French officers on the look-out often met. As long as the wind was westerly, the squadron remained here; but when it shifted to the eastward, which was fair to leave Ferrol, Sir Edward anchored his ships across the entrance of the harbour.

Owing to the prevalence of the westerly gales, the supplies from England were totally inadequate to the wants of the squadron: and it became indispensable to procure them on the spot. Occasionally a few live cattle were received, but the vessels bringing them were driven back, or detained, until the beasts were almost dead. Water was soon found: but it was not easy to obtain provisions in the depth of winter from so poor a country. The Spaniards were very lukewarm, and the French Admiral naturally created every obstacle in his power. This important charge was entrusted to Mr. Fitzgerald, purser of the *Tonnant*, and acting secretary to the Commodore, a gentleman of great resources, and unbounded courage and enterprise. By his exertions a small supply of fresh meat was obtained, with some wine and biscuit; and as confidence became established, cattle and other necessaries were purchased forty miles in the interior. In the performance of his arduous service, Mr. Fitzgerald was twice attempted to be assassinated; and he escaped only by killing the assailant upon one occasion, and by wounding some of the party on the other. Sir Edward was thus enabled to maintain an effectual blockade all the winter. He always expected an attack from Brest, which perhaps might have been attempted if the enemy had known his real strength; but his frequent exchanges with the Channel fleet deceived the French Admiral into a belief that a force was cruising in the neighbourhood, of which the ships he saw were only the in-shore division. Early in the year ships arrived from England with supplies, and every difficulty had been removed, when political events at home led to his recall.

While the general wishes and confidence of the country were directed to Mr. Pitt, as the only minister to carry on the war with energy, the chief support of the Government was the reputation and decisive character of Earl St. Vincent, First Lord of the Admiralty, whose ability as a great commander was even surpassed by his consummate skill as a politician. But the Earl was now suffering the common fate of a practical reformer, to be opposed by the retainers of a former system, and distrusted by all who could not appreciate



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his innovations. Thoroughly acquainted with his own service, he had introduced everywhere, and especially into the dockyards, a bold and unsparing reform, which no ingenuity could evade, and which was felt the more from being coincident with the reductions of peace. All who were thus cut off, and others whose emoluments he curtailed, naturally became hostile; and the inconvenience always created by a change, and which it was the direct interest of so many to aggravate, afforded too favourable opportunities for the prejudiced to misrepresent, and the candid to misunderstand him. In abolishing the practice of building line-of-battle ships in private yards, he took a step of which all subsequent experience has proved the wisdom; but it united against him an extensive and most powerful interest. It was contended that his measures displayed great and unnecessary harshness, and were calculated to break down the effectiveness of the navy. Very many persons of the highest integrity, too little acquainted with the facts, were thus deceived; and even Mr. Pitt, though he had recommended Earl St. Vincent for the Admiralty, believed that he was weakening the most important arm of the country. Under such circumstances, Sir Edward Pellew was recalled, ostensibly, that the Admiralty might confer with him upon these disputed questions. Nothing could be more flattering to him, or indeed more honourable to both parties, than this confidence; for there had never been much cordiality between Earl St. Vincent and Sir Edward, who was both politically and personally an admirer of Mr. Pitt; and it was clear to every one that the ministry was about to fall. But the Earl was too conscious of the wisdom of his measures to fear the judgment of a candid opponent; and he too well appreciated Sir Edward's character not to feel assured that he would allow no private motive, or political predilection, to interfere with the discharge of his duty.

Thus, when Mr. Pitt gave notice of a motion for inquiry into the state of the navy, of which the avowed object was to censure the naval administration, a mutual friend was employed by the Admiralty to learn Sir Edward's opinion of the subjects it embraced, and on finding that his judgment condemned them, to induce him to express his sentiments in the House. To this proposal he readily assented. They had all engaged his attention previously, particularly that relating to the gun-boats, which he had frequently discussed with the late Sir Sidney Smith, who contended that they might be made effective against a line-of-battle ship. Sir Edward would always say, "I should choose to be in the line-of-battle ship." On the day he went to the House, he observed in a letter to his brother that he now quite understood why he had been recalled from Ferrol.



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On the 15th of March, Mr. Pitt brought forward his threatened motions. He contended, that although the enemy had made the most formidable preparations for an invasion, which would probably be attempted within a few weeks, the effective force of the navy, from line-of-battle ships down to hired armed vessels, was at that moment inferior, and less adequate to the exigency of the danger, than at any former period.

Notwithstanding it was so evidently necessary to oppose to the enemy's flotilla a force of a similar description, capable of acting in shallow water, the Admiralty had ordered only twenty-three gun-vessels to be built, of which five were to be completed in three, and the remainder in six months, though the necessity for them was immediate and urgent. He condemned the Admiralty for giving up the former approved plan of building line-of-battle ships by contract in private yards. Two-thirds of the navy, he said, had been thus built; for during a war all the strength of the King's yards was required for repairing ships, and building was necessarily suspended in them almost entirely.

Through the last war, of twenty-nine line-of-battle ships, twenty-seven had been built in merchants' yards; while in the present only two had been contracted for, although fourteen or fifteen slips fit for building them were then unoccupied in the river. He contended, finally, that the Admiralty had been very remiss and unsuccessful in raising men for the navy. In the war of 1793 we began with 16,000 seamen and marines, and had 75,000 or 76,000 at the end of the year. In the present war we began with 50,000 men, and had raised them only to 86,000. Thus, in the former war there had been an increase of 60,000 men in the year; but in the present only of 36,000, though our mercantile marine was so much greater. Upon these arguments he founded motions for an account of all ships, from line-of-battle ships down to hired armed vessels inclusive, in commission on the 31st of December 1793, 30th of September 1801, and 31st of December 1803, specifying the service on which they were respectively employed; for a copy of the contracts made, and the orders given by the Admiralty in 1793, 1797, and 1803, with respect to the number of gun-vessels to be built; for a list of ships built in the King's yards for 1793 and 1801; but if it should be thought that any intelligence on this head might be a channel of improper information to the enemy, he would abstain from pressing it, for he was aware that there would still be grounds sufficiently strong to convince the House that it was the preferable plan to construct vessels in the merchants' yards; and, finally, for a similar list of vessels built by contract in private yards.



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Mr. Tierney, who led the defence for ministers, would agree only to the first and second motions; and he moved, as an amendment to the first, that it should include all other armed ships and vessels employed in the public service. He denied Mr. Pitt's assertions, and combated his arguments. It was an extraordinary proceeding, he said, that an inquiry should be proposed, having for its object the censure of the Admiralty, when every port of the enemy was sealed up, our commerce protected in every direction, and our trade prosperous in an unexampled degree. Our naval force was immense, and admirably calculated for a great variety of service. We had 1,530 vessels employed, of which 511 included the force from line-of-battle ships to hired armed vessels; and 624 were a flotilla completely equipped and ready for immediate service; besides 9 block-ships supplied by the Trinity-house, 19 ships furnished by the East India Company, and 373 lighters, and small craft, fitted in the King's yards. Of 100,000 seamen and marines voted by Parliament, 98,174 had been raised, besides 25,000 sea-fencibles; and this, although the volunteer force of the country was 450,000. He strongly condemned the practice of building ships in merchants' yards. He alluded to the *Ajax*, which had been thus built. She had cost 41,000\_l., and the bargain was thought a good one, yet in three years she required a further sum of 17,000\_l. to fit her for service.

Two parties in the House supported the motions; Admiral Berkeley, Mr. Wilberforce, and others, because they agreed with Mr. Pitt in condemning the measures of the Admiralty; Mr. Fox and his friends, because they considered that an inquiry would redound most highly to the credit of Earl St. Vincent. They contended that ministers opposed it only to screen their notorious incapacity under the shelter of his great name. On the other hand, Admiral Sir Charles Pole, Mr. Sheridan, Mr. Addington, Captain Markham, and others, supported Mr. Tierney, and confirmed all his statements. Nothing, it was said, could afford a stronger proof how enormous were the abuses which Earl St. Vincent had corrected, than the argument of Mr. Pitt and his friends, that men-of-war could not be built in the King's yards, although 3,200 men were employed in them; and it was known that forty-five shipwrights could build a seventy-four in a year. Four hundred of the men discharged had been receiving six shillings a day for doing nothing. Blockmakers' and coopers' work, for which 2,000\_l. had been paid, was proved upon a survey to be worth only 200\_l. As to the gun-boats alluded to, which were built by contract in the last war, they were so bad, that eighty-seven out of a hundred-and-twenty had been sold by public advertisement for almost nothing. The men-of-war launched from private yards had been the ruin of the navy. Three of them went to Portugal, and were found so defective that it was necessary to send them home, with a frigate for convoy. The arrangements



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for the naval defence of the country were most admirable and complete, and if there were any delay in building the twenty-three gun-vessels ordered by the Admiralty, it was because no dependence was placed upon that description of force. It would be folly to meet the enemy with the inferior weapons which necessity obliged him to employ, when we possessed a more powerful arm in our heavy men-of-war and frigates. The depth of water would allow these to act close to our very shores; and if the enemy's flotilla should venture out, Captain Markham, Sir Edward Pellew, Sir Thomas Troubridge, or any officer known in our naval records, would, with a single seventy-four, shoot through and sink a crowd of their contemptible craft.

Ministers obtained a majority of 201 against 130; a most triumphant result for Earl St. Vincent, considering the character of his accuser, and the grounds upon which Mr. Fox and his friends voted for the motions.

Sir Edward Pellew met the charges against the Admiralty with the plain and straightforward declarations of a seaman. Nothing could be more disinterested than his conduct upon this occasion; for there was little to hope from the gratitude of a ministry just tottering to their overthrow, and everything to fear from the resentment of their successors. But he justly considered that upon a vital question, and at such a crisis, no personal or party feeling should intrude; and he felt himself called upon to support the Admiralty with more than a silent vote, because he quite approved their measures, which no man could better understand. He rose fifth in the debate, and spoke as follows:—

“SIR,—As I very seldom trouble the House, I hope I may be permitted to make a few observations on a subject of which, from the professional experience I have had, I may be presumed to have some knowledge. From the debate of this night, there is one piece of information I have acquired, that the French have got upwards of a thousand vessels in Boulogne. I am glad to find they are shut up there; we have one advantage in it—we know where they are. I wish we had any means of knowing when they intend to come out. I know this much, however, that they cannot all get out in one day, or in one night either; and when they do come out, I trust that our cockleshells alone, as an honourable admiral has called a very manageable and very active part of our force, will be able to give a good account of them.” Sir, I do not really see in the arrangement of our naval defence anything to excite the apprehensions of even the most timid among us. On the contrary, I see everything that may be expected from activity and perseverance to inspire us with confidence. I see a triple naval bulwark, composed of one fleet acting on the enemy's coast; of another, consisting of heavier ships, stationed in the Downs, and ready to act at a moment's notice; and a third, close to the beach, capable of destroying any part



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of the enemy's flotilla that should escape the vigilance of the other two branches of our defence. "In respect to what has been said of building ships by contract, I must confess that I do not much admire that mode of keeping up our navy. I have seen some of them—I particularly allude to the *Ajax* and *Achilles*—that I took for Frenchmen. "As to these gun-boats, which have been so strongly recommended, this musquito fleet, they are the most contemptible force that can be employed. Gun-brigs, indeed, are of some use; but between a gun-brig and a gun-boat there is almost as much difference as between a line-of-battle ship and a frigate. I have lately seen half a dozen of them lying wrecked on the rocks. "As to the probability of the enemy being able, in a narrow sea, to pass through our blockading and protecting squadrons, with all that secrecy and dexterity, and by those hidden means that some worthy people expect, I really, from anything that I have seen in the course of my professional career, am not disposed to concur in it. "I know, sir, and can assert with confidence, that our navy was never better found; that it was never better supplied; and that the men were never better fed and better clothed. Have we not all the enemy's ports blockaded from Toulon to Flushing? Are we not able to cope anywhere with any force the enemy dares to send out against us? And do we not even outnumber them at every one of the ports we have blockaded? It would smack a little of egotism, I fear, were I to speak of myself; but as a person lately having the command of six ships, I hope I may be allowed to state to the House how I have been supported in that command. Sir, during the time that I was stationed off Ferrol, I had ships passing from the fleet to me every three weeks or a month; and so much was the French commander in that port deceived by these appearances, that he was persuaded, and I believe is to this very hour, that I had twelve ships under my command, and that I had two squadrons to relieve each other, one of six inside, and the other of six outside."

He was highly complimented by several who followed him in the debate, particularly by Mr. Addington, Mr. Sheridan, and Mr. Courtenay, as well as by other members out of the House. Twenty, who had come down intending to vote for Mr. Pitt's motions, were induced to support the Admiralty, confessedly by Sir Edward's statements. But it is, perhaps, the most decisive proof of the effect of his speech, that Mr. Pitt himself referred to it in a debate on the defence of the country six weeks after. At the same time he disavowed the gun-boats, and contended for "good stout gun-brigs," declaring that he had observed with much satisfaction the efforts which had lately been made to increase that description of force.

Mr. Addington resigned on the 12th of May, with Earl St. Vincent; Mr. Yorke, the Home Secretary; and Lord Hobart, Secretary at War. They were succeeded by Mr. Pitt, and Lords Melville, Harrowby, and Camden.



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On the 23rd of April, there was a naval promotion, in which some of the senior captains, including Sir Edward Pellew, were advanced to be Rear-Admirals of the White, passing over the intermediate step. This favour was probably considered due to them, for they had served considerably beyond the time which had hitherto given an officer his flag, the former promotion having been a small one, and the interval much longer than usual.

Sir Edward received with his promotion the appointment to be commander-in-chief in India. He hoisted his flag in the *Culloden*, and gratified Captain Christopher Cole, the youngest brother of his deceased friend, and who had served with him as a midshipman in the *Winchelsea*, by naming him for his captain.

### CHAPTER VIII.

#### SIR EDWARD'S COMMAND IN INDIA.

The arduous charge of a commander-in-chief requires more than great decision, and a judgment matured by experience. It claims also a mind naturally comprehensive, that it may be equal to great and complicated responsibilities. He has other, and not less important duties than to harass the enemy. He is to protect the commerce of his country; to make his influence so felt over every part of his station, that merit may be encouraged, and negligence effectually controlled; to provide in all respects for the efficiency of his fleet; and to act with the full powers of an ambassador, whenever there is no accredited minister. In addition to these more obvious duties, occasions will continually arise which demand the utmost temper and discretion. If the secret history of the greatest, and most popular commanders were fully made known—what difficulties they encountered, and what anxieties they endured—not many would be found to envy them their distinctions.

The change in the ministry, which took place within three weeks after Sir Edward's promotion and appointment, subjected him, in its consequences, to many and great inconveniences; for the new Board of Admiralty manifested a decidedly hostile feeling. Such was the temper displayed, that he thought it necessary to caution his brother Israel to observe the utmost circumspection in all his conduct, and never even to sleep out of his ship. The evident desire to deprive him of his command left him very little expectation that he would be allowed to keep it, and in his first letter from India he observed, "Probably my successor is already on his way to supersede me." He was not far mistaken.

The most valuable, indeed the only valuable part of his command was that to the eastward of Ceylon, which included the two chief presidencies, and all the rich colonies of the enemy. It was resolved to deprive him of this, by creating it a separate station, leaving to him only the western seas. The more desirable portion was conferred upon Rear-Admiral Sir Thomas Troubridge, an officer whose reputation must endure



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as long as the name and services of Nelson are remembered; and whose unquestioned merit affords every cause to regret that he was innocently made the instrument of such a proceeding. He hoisted his flag in the *Blenheim*, an old three-decker which had been cut down to a seventy-four, and sailed from England in the spring of 1805, with a fleet of Indiamen under his convoy; and after beating off Rear-Admiral Linois, who attacked him with the *Marengo* and *Belle Poule*, reached India in August.

When Sir Thomas went on board the *Culloden*, on his unwelcome, but not unexpected errand, Sir Edward inquired if he had brought his own letters of recall. Finding that the Admiralty had overlooked the essential step of sending them, he declared, that until they arrived he could not resign any part of his command. He was charged with it by the King, and was required by the regulations of the service to hold it until recalled by the same authority. Sir Thomas thought that a commission was cancelled by a posterior one, without a direct recall; but Sir Edward, who was equalled by very few in his knowledge of naval law, found it easy to convince him to the contrary, or at least to refute his arguments. He told Sir Thomas that if he remained in India, it must be under his own orders, for his commission comprehended all the station, and it was impossible for a junior to command in the presence of his superior officer. When Sir Thomas, indignant at the proposal, refused to act under the other's authority, Sir Edward brought the question very promptly to an issue, by writing, and handing to Sir Thomas, an order on service.

Both officers were naturally warm, and Sir Thomas, disappointed as well as irritated, and who was taken so entirely by surprise, had by this time quite lost his temper. Indeed, the altercation had gone so far, that nothing but a sense of their public responsibility prevented a more unpleasant meeting. Sir Edward had hitherto maintained his self-command; but as Sir Thomas continued warm, and he was conscious of the infirmity of his own temper, he went himself to the cabin-door, and calling for Captain Cole, desired him to remain as a witness of all that passed. The two Admirals quickly came, not perhaps to a more friendly feeling, but at least to a better understanding. Sir Thomas could not but see that the other was acting in strict conformity to his duty, and he had the assurance that the Admiralty would correct their oversight as soon as a reference could be made to them. Sir Edward must have felt it most painful thus to meet an officer whose character stood deservedly among the highest in the service; the trusted friend, and almost the other self of Nelson. Acting with the utmost disinterestedness, though he could only expect to be superseded, for a public board will seldom confess itself to have been in error, he did not hesitate, as soon as his own authority had been properly admitted, to give Sir Thomas a separate squadron in the best



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part of the station. It proved a most lucrative command, for in addition to its general advantages, some prizes of immense value were taken. On the 20th of July, 1806, the *Greyhound* frigate and *Harrier* sloop of war fell in with two large armed Indiamen, richly laden with spices, and protected by a frigate and a corvette. The British gallantly attacked them, and captured, with little loss, the frigate, and both the Indiamen. To add to the gratification of the Admiral, it was his son, Captain Troubridge, who commanded the *Harrier*.

Sir Edward, as far as he was himself concerned, had eventually little reason for regret. The position of true dignity, to be always ready to sacrifice to public duty personal feelings, and to surrender, when necessary, personal interests, but never to compromise any point of principle or character, is generally the course not less of prudence than of honour. He obtained on this occasion all he could desire, and more than he had hoped for, a candid inquiry. Before his letter reached England, there had been a change in the ministry, and Mr. Grey was at the head of the Admiralty. Nothing could be more honourable than all his conduct. It was at first believed that Sir Edward had committed an illegal and unprecedented act of resistance to that authority which, as an officer, he was bound implicitly to obey. Yet, believing that he had acted hastily, Mr. Grey himself went to the Duke of Northumberland, as Sir Edward's friend, to say, that the board would allow him to write a letter on service, recalling his ill-advised communication. The Duke sent to Sir Edward's brother, who was then in town, that he might write to India without delay; but Mr. Pellew at first thought the step unnecessary. His brother, he said, was not in the habit of acting without due consideration, and he did not think it would be found that he had done so now. But next day. Earl St. Vincent called upon the Duke, and insisted more strongly on the necessity for the step. Sir Edward's letter, he said, was not a question of this or the other administration, but an act of insubordination which no ministry could overlook: that his professional prospects would be entirely destroyed if the board took cognizance of it; and that extraordinary lenity was shown in allowing him to recall it. A letter was accordingly written; but before a ship sailed, Mr. Grey came a second time to the Duke, and told him he had found, upon inquiry, that Sir Edward was right. He did more; for he wrote to Sir Edward himself a very kind and handsome letter; and though opposed to him in political opinions, while Sir Thomas Troubridge was connected with his own friends, he recalled this officer, whom he appointed to the Cape, and continued to Sir Edward, as at first, the entire command in India.



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Sir Thomas had with great reason assured himself of a different result. He prepared immediately to cross the Indian Ocean to the Cape in the *Blenheim*, though she was utterly unseaworthy, and required constant pumping even in harbour. She had grounded on a shoal in the Straits of Malacca, and was obliged to throw her guns overboard, and cut away her masts, before she could be got off. Her back was broken, her frame shaken to pieces, and she hogged excessively. In fact, her head and stern fell so much, that she rose like a hill amidships, and a person at the door of the poop-cabin could not see the sentry on the forecastle below his middle. Sir Edward Pellew entreated the Admiral to select any other ship on the station for his flag. The Captain of the *Blenheim* formally reported her condition, but was told, that if he were afraid, he might go on shore, a taunt that compelled the unfortunate officer to sacrifice himself with the ship's company. The Admiral thought to force back the broken keel to its place by putting in a very heavy mainmast, and could not be convinced that he thus increased the danger. The distinguished officer who supplied these particulars went on board the *Blenheim* the day she sailed, to take leave of the Captain, and found that he had just written a last farewell to his wife, from a conviction that the ship must inevitably founder. On the 12th of January, 1807, she sailed from Madras, in company with the *Java* frigate, and the *Harrier* sloop of war. On the 5th of February, the *Harrier* parted company off the island of Rodrigues, in a very heavy gale, in which the unfortunate *Blenheim* and *Java* were seen to make repeated signals of distress. They were never again heard of!

The possibility that the ships might have run on shore induced Sir Edward to send the Admiral's son with the *Greyhound* frigate in search of his lamented parent. Captain Troubridge explored the coasts with all the anxiety that filial affection could inspire, receiving every assistance from the French authorities at the isles of France and Bourbon; but he could discover no certain traces of the ships, and no doubt remained that they had both foundered.

Sir Edward had been in India but a very short time, when his friend and former opponent, Bergeret, was brought to him a prisoner. This gallant officer had employed himself through the peace in the merchant service, with the *Psyche*, formerly a small national frigate. When hostilities were renewed, he armed her with thirty-six guns, and sent her out in charge of another officer, Captain Trogoff, not choosing to command a privateer. In her first cruise, on the 11th of April, 1804, she attacked, and was beaten off by the *Wilhelmina* store-ship, Captain Henry Lambert, and returning to the Isle of France, disabled, General Decaen, the governor, bought her into the national marine, and appointed Bergeret to command her. He cruised in the Bay of Bengal



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for a short time with much success, while his very liberal conduct obtained for him the highest respect of the British residents. Fortune was again unjust to him. On the 14th of February, 1805, the *San Fiorenzo*, commanded by Captain Lambert, late of the *Wilhelmina*, and which had been sent expressly in pursuit of him, fell in with the *Psyche* off Vizagapatam, and after a chase of two days brought her to action. Bergeret defended his ship against a very superior force for three hours and a half, when the *San Fiorenzo* hauled off to repair her rigging, leaving him with his ship entirely disabled, and more than half his crew killed and wounded. On the approach of the British frigate to renew the action, he surrendered.

Sir Edward was a warm admirer of the brave prisoner, whose character so much resembled his own, and who returned his friendship with equal warmth and sincerity. There is not often such a scene on board a man-of-war as occurred when the two officers first met on the quarter-deck of the *Culloden*. Both were deeply affected, and the struggle of their feelings, from meeting under such circumstances, drew tears from many who witnessed the interview.[11]

Sir Edward was not always so happy as to meet with enemies thus deserving of his sympathy. A French frigate, the *Piedmontaise*, was guilty of conduct which would have disgraced a pirate. Cruising off the Cape, on the 17th of February, 1805, she fell in with the *Warren Hastings*, one of the China fleet which on a former voyage so gallantly bent off the squadron of Admiral Linois; and after a very long and severe action, in which the Indiaman was dismasted, and otherwise completely disabled, took her. Her brave defence appears to have excited the fury of the enemy, probably because her very crippled state increased the probability of recapture. Before taking possession of the prize, the frigate, by her own mismanagement, fell on board. Immediately, the first lieutenant, with a party of ruffians, many of whom, like their leader, were intoxicated, rushed on the deck of the Indiaman with horrid imprecations and drawn daggers, accusing the prisoners of having run foul of the frigate intentionally. The lieutenant himself wounded Captain Larkins dangerously, and stabbed a young midshipman in several places; and the second officer, the surgeon, and a boatswain's mate, were wounded by his followers. Sir Edward did not become acquainted with these facts for two years, as Captain Larkins and his crew could not depose to them until they reached St. Helena, after they had been liberated from the Isle of France. The *Piedmontaise* was then cruising in the Indian seas, and Sir Edward transmitted copies of the depositions to every ship on the station, with a general order, in which "the attention of the respective captains and commanders of H.M.'s squadron is especially called to the statement, in order that the ferocious conduct of the first lieutenant, and part of the crew of the *Piedmontaise*, may receive the general reprobation of H.M.'s service."



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The *San Fiorenzo* was again the fortunate frigate which stopped the career of the enemy. Commanded by Captain George Nicholas Hardinge, brother of Lord Hardinge, the present Commander-in-Chief—a young officer of great promise and distinguished courage—she fell in with the *Piedmontaise* on the evening of the 6th of March, 1808; and after an exchange of broadsides that night, and a severe but still undecided engagement next morning, brought her to close action on the afternoon of the third day, and took her. The *San Fiorenzo* commenced action with only 186 effective men; the *Piedmontaise*, a larger and heavier frigate, had more than 500, including 200 Lascars. Captain Hardinge was unfortunately killed on the third day. For some time before the enemy struck, the first lieutenant was seen exposing himself to the hottest of the fire; till, disappointed of the death he sought, and dreading to fall into the hands of the British, he discharged his pistols into his own body. It is said, that as he did not die immediately, he ordered some of his people to throw him overboard alive.

The French naval force in the Indian seas was at no time considerable, for whenever a cruiser was known to be committing depredations, her career was generally cut short by some of the squadron. It consisted chiefly of privateers, for which the Isle of France afforded a convenient rendezvous; and of which some were large enough to capture a regular Indiaman. The *Emiline*, taken after a two days' chase by the *Culloden*, had been a British sloop of war: and the *Bellone*, taken by the *Powerful* and *Rattlesnake*, was added to the navy as a small-class frigate, and actually maintained a running fight with the seventy-four. The resemblance between ships of war and the larger Indiamen more than once deceived the enemy. The *Union*, a small privateer, mounting only eight guns, thus ventured to chase, and was taken by the *Culloden*; and the *Jena*, national corvette, was taken in the same manner by the *Modeste* frigate. The *Jena* was a remarkably fine and fast vessel, and, as the *Revenant* privateer, had formerly cruised long and very successfully. She was commissioned as the *Victor*, to replace a sloop of war of that name, which in the preceding year had been the scene of one of the most extraordinary and tragical events on record.

The *Victor*, commanded by Captain George Bell, whose name has been already mentioned in connection with the *Nymphe* and *Indefatigable*, had taken four brigs in Batavia Road, and was returning to Prince of Wales' Island. On the 15th of April 1807, off Cheribon, she met three Malay prows under Dutch colours, which, on its falling calm, she detained with the armed boats, and brought alongside. The crews of two of them, a hundred and twenty men, were taken on board the *Victor*, and placed under a guard, while the prows were being examined;

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but the people in the third being refractory, a carronade was fired into her, and some small arms, which they returned by throwing spears and firing pistols. A second gun was therefore fired, some sparks from which reached a quantity of powder which had been taken out of the prows, and blew up the after-part of the ship. The guard ran to extinguish the flames, leaving the prisoners, who instantly seized their arms, with the spears and knives which had been thrown on board, and attacked the crew with all the desperation of their character. The prows were immediately cut adrift, and the crew, under the direction of their officers, proceeded with admirable order and coolness, one part to extinguish the fire, and the rest to defend themselves against the murderous attack. After half an hour's dreadful struggle for life, for the Malays would take no quarter, eighty of them lay dead on the deck, and the rest were driven overboard. The *Victor* had her first lieutenant and five men killed, and her captain and twenty-five wounded; nine of whom died shortly after.

Holland, which in reality, though not yet in name, was now a French province, had a moderately strong squadron in India. Two frigates had been taken since Sir Edward's arrival, the *Maria Riggersbergen*, by the *Caroline*; and the *Pallas*, by the *Greyhound* and *Harrier*. The first was the unfortunate ship which, under the name of the *Java*, shared the fate of the *Blenheim*; the other was the convoy of the spice ships. Two line-of-battle ships, the *Pluto* and *Revolutie* with a frigate and several corvettes and gun-boats, were at anchor in Batavia Road; and information had been received by the *Powerful*, 74, Captain Plamplin, that Rear-Admiral Willaumez, with six sail of the line, one of them commanded by Jerome Bonaparte, might be expected in the Indian seas. To destroy the ships already at Batavia, and to intercept the French squadron, Sir Edward sailed on the 22nd of October 1806, from Madras to Trincomalee. Here a fleet of Indiamen under his convoy was joined by other ships, and went on to Europe in charge of the *Woolwich* and *Duncan*; while the Admiral, with the *Culloden*, *Powerful*, *Russell*, and *Belliqueux* line-of-battle ships, and *Terpsichore* frigate, proceeded to the Straits of Sunda, where the *Albion* and others were to join him. Lieutenant Owen, commanding the *Seaflower* brig, was instructed to disguise her as one of the expected French squadron, and to hasten on before. On the 23rd of November, they were joined by the frigate *Sir Francis Drake*, Captain Pownoll Pellew; and on the same day they learnt that Willaumez had gone to America. On the 26th they arrived in the Straits of Sunda, where they found the *Seaflower*, which had already communicated with the Dutch authorities at Bantam as one of the expected French force, and information was sent accordingly to the Governor at Batavia. So completely were the enemy deceived by this step, that the squadron sailed along the coast of Java, and anchored on the 27th in Batavia Road, before its character was suspected.



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As soon as it was known to be British, the *Phoenix*, 40-gun frigate; the *Aventure* and *Zee-ploeg*, national corvettes; the *Patriot*, and another ship of 20 guns, and three brigs of 14, Company's cruisers; with more than twenty merchant vessels, ran themselves on shore under the extensive batteries of Batavia. Another corvette, the *William*, struck to the *Terpsichore* as she was entering the road; but the line-of-battle ships had sailed a few days before to Griessee, a fortified harbour on the Sourabaya river, at the eastern extremity of the island. The boats of the whole squadron, with five hundred picked men, commanded by the Admiral's second son, Captain Fleetwood Pellew, of the *Terpsichore*, and covered by the fire from the frigates, were sent without delay to destroy the enemy's ships. The decision of Captain Pellew, which scarcely allowed them time to man their guns, made their fire almost harmless. He boarded the *Phoenix*, whose crew quitted her on his approach; turned her guns on the other armed vessels; burnt all the shipping except three merchant vessels, which were brought away; and in less than two hours returned with the boats, having effected the whole service with no greater loss than one man killed and four wounded.

One of the ships lay at the little island of Onroost, which is piled and jettied all around, and contained a small and compact repairing yard for merchant vessels of all nations. Two boats were sent to destroy her, with strict orders to injure nothing on shore; but unfortunately she drove alongside the jetty, and, to the great regret of the Admiral, the flames communicated to the buildings, and occasioned much damage. The squadron sailed on the 1st of December, the *Culloden* and *Belliqueux* to return to India, the others for their respective stations. Thus easily was completed an enterprise, as admirably planned as it was gallantly executed. General Daendels, when he became Captain-General of Java and the Moluccas, some time after, sent a message to Sir Edward, that he hoped he would not pay him a visit without an invitation.

In the following June, the Admiral sent Captain Fleetwood Pellew in the *Psyche*, with the *Caroline* under his orders, to ascertain the condition of the Dutch line-of-battle ships at Griessee. Captain Pellew displayed on this occasion the same spirit which had marked his former service. The frigates reached their destination August 29th, and on the following day learned that the men-of-war were lying in the port dismantled, and very much out of repair. They now proceeded to Samarang, where the *Psyche* arrived, and anchored off the port at midnight, the *Caroline* having parted company in chase. At daylight she weighed, and stood into the road, where an armed schooner and a merchant brig were anchored near the batteries. These were brought out by the boats, under a heavy but ineffectual fire.



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Two large ships and a brig had been seen early in the morning at anchor outside, afterwards found to be the *Resolutie*, armed merchant vessel, of 700 tons, with a valuable cargo, and having the colours and staff of a Dutch European regiment on board; the *Scipio*, national corvette, of 24 guns and 150 men; and the *Ceres*, Company's brig of war. That he might be ready to take advantage of the sea-breeze, Captain Pellew destroyed the prizes, and before noon the *Psyche* was clear of the harbour in chase, the enemy having weighed and stood to sea. The frigate gaining fast upon them, they all ran themselves on shore at half-past three, and opened their fire. The *Psyche* anchored as near as the depth of water would allow, and presently compelled the merchant ship to surrender. At half-past four, just as the frigate was lowering her boats to board, the *Scipio* struck: and the brig soon after fired a broadside, and hauled down her colours. They were all got off safely the same night, and Captain Pellew, after arranging with the Governor of Samarang for sending on shore the prisoners, who far outnumbered his own crew, returned to port with his prizes.

On the arrival of the *Psyche*, Sir Edward sailed from Madras, with the *Culloden* and *Powerful*, seventy-fours; *Caroline* and *Fox*, frigates; *Victor*, *Samarang*, *Seaflower*, and *Jaseur*, sloops of war; and *Wexford*, a large Indiaman, fitted as a troop-ship: with five companies of the 34th regiment, and a company of artillery, under Lieutenant-Colonel Lockhart. The squadron proceeded first to Prince of Wales' Island, where it embarked the Royals, and the 34th; and on the 20th of November sailed finally for its destination. On the morning of the 5th of December it arrived off Point Panka, the eastern extremity of Java; and Sir Edward sent a summons to M. Cowell, commander of the Gallo-Batavian force, to surrender the ships of war under his orders. "The British," he wrote, "are the natural friends of the Dutch. We are impressed with correspondent sentiments. It is become our duty to prevent the Dutch ships of war from acting under the control of France in hostility to the British." He then proposed that the ships of war, and all vessels under French colours, be given up, promising in that case security for the inhabitants and garrison; and threatening, in the event of a refusal, those hostile operations which the naval and military forces were jointly prepared to accomplish. Captain Fleetwood Pellew, with a military officer, and the Admiral's secretary, delivered this proposal to the French commodore; but that officer, in violation of the flag of truce, detained them all as prisoners, and returned an answer of defiance.



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The force assembled for the attack was such as might deter the enemy from attempting resistance, with a sufficient force of small vessels to be equal to the service, if the line-of-battle ships should be unable to get up. At the entrance of the river, about ten miles up the harbour, the *Culloden* and *Powerful*, though they had been previously lightened, and trimmed to an even keel, to equalize their draught of water fore-and-aft, grounded on what was called the bar, and which proved to be a flat, several miles in extent. Part of their water was started, and their guns, shot, provisions, and whatever would materially lighten them, were removed into three coasting-vessels detained for that purpose; but still they remained fast. The rest of the squadron, except the troop-ship, which was also aground, crossed the bar, and passing a stockade of large trees, anchored in deep water below the island of Madura. On the evening of the 6th, Sir Edward, seeing no probability of carrying up the large ships, determined to force the passage, and attack the place without them, and accordingly shifted his flag to the *Caroline*. Fortunately, at nine o'clock that night the water began to rise; and by ten, the *Culloden* was afloat and under sail. Following a boat with a light, which was directed by Mr. Gaze, the master, she passed the stockade, and by eleven o'clock was anchored above the bar in deep water. Before daylight, the Admiral returned to her, and all the squadron, except the *Powerful* and the troop-ship, which had not yet floated, weighed with the sea-breeze, and stood for the narrow passage between Madura and Java. At half-past eleven, they were engaged with the batteries on the island; but they passed them by half-past twelve, without having received material damage. At a little past four, the squadron anchored abreast of the Fort of Griessee, but no farther resistance was offered, except a few ineffectual shots fired from that fort at the *Culloden*; M. Cowell having previously determined to defend the place to the last against the frigates and sloops, but to surrender if the line-of-battle ships got up. The *Powerful* joined next day. In coming up, she was struck from the batteries on Madura with hot shot, but her people extinguished the fire. The troops took possession of the fort, leaving the town in the hands of the civil authorities: and on the 9th, the Governor and Council of Somabaya, having thankfully acquiesced in the liberal terms dictated by Sir Edward, all hostilities ceased. They had promptly released the gentlemen whom the commodore had so unjustifiably detained; and a deputation of three members of their own body accompanied them to the Admiral, to disavow the act of M. Cowell, and to treat for a capitulation.



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Having burnt the *Pluto*, *Revolutie*, and *Kortenaar*, line-of-battle ships, and a large Indiaman, fitted as a frigate, and destroyed the military stores and batteries at Griessee and Madura, the squadron weighed on the 13th, and stood down the river in charge of the Dutch pilots. On the 15th, they crossed the bar, and two days after, having completed their provisions and water, left the coast. Not a man was lost in all the service. When Java was taken, in 1811, a squadron was sent to Sourabaya; but none of the large ships could get over the bar; and their officers would scarcely credit the fact that the *Culloden* and *Powerful* had reached Griessee.

The *Culloden* arrived at Madras on the 10th of February, and found there the *Russell* and *Duncan*, with troops embarked to attack Tranquebar. They sailed next day, and the place surrendered on being summoned.

But all these operations, complete as they were in their success, were of far less importance than the effectual protection which Sir Edward afforded to commerce. His position, with reference to this point, had been peculiarly fortunate: for the confidential intercourse which existed between him and his brothers, and the warm interest which they took in one another's pursuits, had induced him to give much attention to the commercial system of the country. Particularly, he had become familiar with the important subject of insurance and convoys, upon which his brother had been much in communication with the government. At an early period of his command in India, he submitted to the merchants and underwriters a proposal to establish a regular system of convoys; and invited them to suggest from their own local experience the regulations likely to be the most convenient and effectual. The merchants entered readily into his plans and the results were satisfactory. Some loss was, indeed, still experienced through a frequent practice of masters of vessels to sail without convoy, or to separate from it on the passage. The commanders of the enemy's cruisers generally treated their prisoners well, and released them at the earliest opportunity; so that sailing without protection became a mere commercial calculation between a higher premium of insurance, and the profits from an early arrival, for little personal inconvenience was to be apprehended from capture. To check this practice, the Bengal Government, in December, 1806, issued a proclamation, declaring that all masters of vessels who separated from their convoy without sufficient cause, should be removed from India; and in 1808, the Court of Directors ordered, that the master of every country ship should enter into a bond of 5,000 rupees, at the custom-house from which he cleared, as a penalty for any separation. Not that the danger was often great, for the vigilance of the squadron seldom allowed an enemy's cruiser a long career; but it sometimes happened, as was particularly the case while the force was assembled for the expedition to Sourabaya, that an enemy would unexpectedly show himself, and commit serious depredations.



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During the debate in the House of Commons, on the vote of thanks for the victory at Algiers, Mr. Money, an East India Director, who had been in India during Sir Edward's command, bore a strong testimony to the merit and success of his system. "Such," he said, "was the vigilance with which Sir Edward had chased the enemy from our extensive shores, and so powerful the protection which he gave to our commerce in those seas, that property to the amount of millions had been saved, which otherwise would have fallen into the hands of the enemy." Making all the allowance which a loose and general estimate usually requires, the assertion at least shows the estimation in which Sir Edward's services were held. A series of resolutions entered into by the merchants and underwriters of Bombay, in December, 1808, when he was on the point of returning to Europe, affords more precise evidence. From the data furnished by the trade of this port, may be inferred the greatness of the benefits which the commerce of India received from his protection.

"Resolved—That it appears to this meeting of merchants, shipowners, and underwriters, of Bombay, to be an indispensable act of justice, more especially under existing circumstances, publicly to declare, on the approaching departure of his Excellency Vice-Admiral Sir Edward Pellew for Europe, the extent of the protection which the commerce of Bombay has received, since the assumption by his Excellency of the command-in-chief of his Majesty's ships in the Indian seas.—That it appears by a document framed in the insurance-office of Bombay, that the rate of premium from Bombay to China, and from China to Bombay, from the year 1708 to 1805, fluctuated between twelve, ten, nine, and eight per cent.; while, during the period of Sir Edward Pellew's command, from 1805 to 1808 inclusive, it has stood at eight per cent., with a return of three per cent., if sailing with convoy, and at five per cent., if warranted with convoy: the rate of insurance has, therefore, been fifty per cent, lower on the commerce of the port of Bombay during Sir Edward Pellew's command than at any former period.—That since the arrival of Sir Edward Pellew, a period of only three years, one hundred and ten ships have exported and imported, to and from China, under convoy during the whole voyage; while only twenty-eight have run the passage unprotected, in consequence of their sailing out of the seasons fixed for the regular convoys; at the same time that those which have departed unprotected on the eve of appointed convoys, or have separated in the course of the voyage, have not failed to attract the notice and remonstrance of his Excellency.—That the operation of the system of convoys had afforded complete security to the trading capital of Bombay, of which the amount insured at this settlement, from May 1st, 1806, to October 31st, 1808, has been 6,700,000\_l.\_;



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that the premium paid by the trade on that sum amounts to 445,000\_l.\_; that the losses by captures amount to 61,000\_l.\_; that the losses by sea risks extended to 69,000\_l.\_; and that the profits to the underwriters amount to the sum of 314,000\_l.\_; the losses by captures being under one per cent, on the principal insured, and exceeded by those arising from sea-risks; while the former have occurred beyond the influence, or have been a consequence of a departure from that regular system of convoy, by which the commerce of the western division of the peninsula of India has been so extensively benefited.—That the advantage resulting from protection by convoys, which the trade of this port has thus experienced, has originated in that system which was established, and has prevailed, since the succession to the command of H.M.'s ships in India by Sir Edward Pellew; a system proposed at his express invitation, in the letter addressed to his Excellency by the three leading firms in behalf of the merchants of Bombay, on the 12th of February, 1806, and adopted in the reply of his Excellency's secretary of the following day.—That at a time when the enemy has sacrificed his maritime reputation, and every feeling of naval ambition, to a degrading system of privateering, in the prosecution of which national ships of superior force and construction are employed, for the purpose of committing depredations on our trade, it is indispensable to the successful prosecution of our commercial interests, essential to our national credit, and justly due to the character of those to whom the protection of these valuable and important trusts is committed, that a steady adherence to that system should be observed, of the solid advantages of which, the experience of three years has afforded so decided a proof.—That independently of the ample protection afforded to the commerce of the port, his Excellency Sir Edward Pellew has manifested a degree of personal anxiety for the security of its trade, characteristic of that zeal and vigilance which have ever distinguished his professional career; that the interference of his Excellency led to the advertisements issued at his suggestion by the insurance society of Bombay in the year 1806, promotive of encouragement to sail and continue under convoy; and subsequently, to the salutary provisions contained in the proclamations published by the governments of Bengal and Bombay in the year 1807, restrictive of the practice of ships separating from convoy; and, moreover, that his Excellency's solicitude in this respect has succeeded in establishing a degree of control over our shipping, hitherto unknown in the Indian seas.—That these important facts, as established by the most minute investigation, do eminently entitle his Excellency Sir Edward Pellew, to a more formal declaration of those grateful acknowledgments which he has already received from a great and decided



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majority of the merchants, shipowners, and underwriters of Bombay.

“—That these resolutions be communicated to his Excellency Sir Edward Pellew, with a suitable address, and published in the *Bombay Courier*.

“CHARLES FORBES, Chairman.”

The great extent of the Indian command, and the comparatively small force with which it was held, called forth the utmost exertions of every officer; and the attention of the commander-in-chief was unceasingly directed to everything which was calculated to maintain his squadron in the highest state of efficiency. Lord Torrington, who was at that time serving under his orders, bore testimony in the House of Lords to the care and judgment by which, while he prevented any waste of naval stores, he kept the ships always well supplied, and in a state always ready for action. Overlooking nothing connected with the interest of his crews, he established a naval hospital at Madras, a measure fraught with economy to the country, and advantage to the service.

As an Admiral, not less than as a Captain, Sir Edward interested himself in the welfare and comfort of every man under his command; but the clamour of that false humanity which is one of the most prominent vices of the present day would never influence him. He knew that, even in the best ordered ships, punishment may be sometimes necessary as an extreme alternative, though the exercise of it demands great discretion. Too many will be found, especially during a war, when it is impossible to inquire into the character of those who come into the service, who are callous to every better motive; and with reference to such, we must respect the humanity more than the judgment of those who would substitute privations injurious to health, for the pain of the lash, and studied indignities for the shame of it. Little consideration can be claimed for that pretended sense of honour, which is sensitive to the shame of punishment, but callous to the degradation of crime. The experience of every good officer will bear out the assertions, that a strict commander is always the most popular; that the orderly system of a well regulated ship, in which every man knows his duty, and performs it without being teasingly interfered with, affords the best security against offences; and that when an offence has been committed, the ship's company, and even the culprit himself, will respect the captain who patiently investigates the fault, and dispassionately orders the deserved punishment.

But on the other hand, except in particular cases, as where a ship has been manned by drafts from the fleet; in other words, by receiving the skulkers and incorrigibles, whom every captain desires to get rid of, frequency of punishment is the most certain proof of unsatisfactory discipline. Either there will be a laxity which encourages by the prospect of impunity, or else a want of system, in which the caprice of



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the officer is the rule for the moment, and the men can never fall into regular habits. Sir Edward's observation had taught him, that while the power to punish can be entrusted only to the discretion of the commander, it is right, on every ground, that it should be exercised under some check. Accordingly, soon after he went to India, he required a monthly return of punishment from every ship in his fleet; and the Admiralty, struck with the simplicity of the plan, and not less with the excellent effects, adopted it for all the navy. This was the first step in the milder and more effectual system of discipline which has since prevailed; and if he had no other claim than to have originated this, it would be sufficient to entitle him to the gratitude of every officer and man in the service.

He sailed from India in February, 1809, with a fleet of Indiamen under his convoy. Off the Isle of France they encountered a violent hurricane, in which the *Culloden* was in the greatest danger. For three days no provisions could be cooked, and the crew subsisted chiefly on dry rice, with a dram every four hours. So violent was the motion of the ship, as she rolled from broadside to broadside, that the chain-pumps were almost useless. All the quarter-boats were lost, the quarter-galleries washed away, and three of the dead lights stove. Fortunately her bottom was sound, but she broke much in the upper works; the bolts working themselves loose, and many of the knees giving way. Even the cabin bulkheads were thrown down. It was suggested to the Admiral, who was almost constantly on deck, encouraging the men at the pumps, that the ship would be materially eased if the upper deck guns were thrown overboard. He replied, "I do not think it necessary; she will do very well, and what would become of the convoy if we meet an enemy?" It was his intention, if the gale had continued, to cut away the mainmast, which, being very heavy—for it weighed twenty-one tons—strained the ship exceedingly. The mizen-mast had given way in the top. Four of the convoy foundered, and the rest were scattered; but all which escaped the gale re-assembled at St. Helena, and, with the *Culloden*, arrived safely in England.

FOOTNOTE:

[11] Bergeret rose to be an Admiral, and was not long since Commander-in-Chief at Brest.

## CHAPTER IX.

NORTH SEA AND FIRST MEDITERRANEAN COMMAND.

The expedition to the Scheldt was being fitted out when Sir Edward arrived from India; and had he reached England but a few days sooner, it was understood that he would have received the naval command. The military commander-in-chief, whose friendship

he had long enjoyed, wished him to be appointed; but the final arrangements of the Admiralty had been already completed.



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Lord Mulgrave afterwards proposed to him to be second in command in the Mediterranean; and suggested that Lord Collingwood would probably be glad to surrender his charge to an officer who possessed the confidence of the Admiralty; for that of late he had repeatedly expressed a desire to be relieved from it on account of his declining health. But Sir Edward, who was not aware of the actual condition of that distinguished Admiral, declined the offer, for he could not be persuaded that Lord Collingwood would resign a command which he filled so usefully and honourably, as long as he could possibly hold it with advantage to his country.

He did not remain long unemployed, though he never attempted to create an interest in his favour by any indirect means. Political intrigue, he has said, does not sit well on a sea-officer; and he would not attach himself to the fortunes of any administration, or party. This, as it is the most honourable, is also in the end the most successful path; but the man who travels thus alone and unsupported, must be prepared for the many attacks to which such a position will expose him. Some such annoyance or interference may have prompted the following blunt avowal of independence in a letter, of the 28th of July, 1810.

“I have no right to the favour of Mr. Percival, or any minister.—I have never intrigued, nor ever will—and as to sneaking after such people, I will not—and as to the command of the Channel fleet, be it Pole, or be it Calder, I care not one straw—and whether I am on the shelf by any new set, is equally indifferent—and for me, who am fifty-three, except the heart-felt satisfaction of serving my country in such times, I will never be at the trouble to write a letter to ask a favour of any minister alive. I care not who comes in, or who goes out, and if they send me on shore, well; and if not, it is the same.”

In the spring of 1810 he hoisted his flag on board the *Christian VII.* as commander in-chief in the North Sea. He rode at anchor with his fleet all the summer, off the mouth of the Scheldt, just in sight of land; while his smaller vessels were actively employed along the whole line of coast. He frequently stood into the Scheldt in a cutter, that he might reconnoitre the enemy's fleet in person. A gale from the eastward having blown the fleet off the coast, it was at anchor in the Downs, when a gun-brig arrived with intelligence that the enemy had dropped down to the Western Scheldt, apparently ready to sail. He ordered the fleet to sea immediately; but many of them having made signal of inability, for the pilots refused to get them under weigh, he sent for the chief pilot of the flag ship, and questioned him if it were practicable to take out a ship in such weather. The pilot having reported that it was quite safe, even for the *Christian VII.*, which from her great length was the least manageable ship in the fleet, much more so for the others, some of which



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worked like cutters, the Admiral made signal for all captains and pilots to come on board. He then repeated his order to sail, and enforced obedience. The fleet sailed, and beat across the North Sea to their station, without an accident; and the enemy returned to their former anchorage as soon as the blockading force appeared. As the autumn advanced, the pilots gave up the charge of the fleet; but Sir Edward kept his station, until the increasing severity of the gales compelled him to take shelter in the Downs.

In the spring of 1811, he succeeded Sir Charles Cotton as commander-in-chief in the Mediterranean. He proceeded to his station in the *Caledonia*, with his brother Israel, lately promoted to be a Rear Admiral, as captain of the fleet; and arrived off Toulon on the 18th of July. Next morning, two French frigates returning from Genoa with conscripts for the fleet were chased by the *Conqueror* and *Sultan*, the inshore squadron; and the French commander, Vice-Admiral Comte Emeriau, sailed out with thirteen line-of-battle ships and a frigate, to protect them. The *Conqueror* approached near enough to fire upon the frigates, and afterwards, with her consort, exchanged a few distant broadsides with the advanced ships of the enemy: but these, whose only object was to secure the frigates, did not wait for the main body of the British force, now fast coming up, but hastened back to their anchorage. This affair, with the evident high state of equipment of the French fleet, led all to expect that there would soon be a general action; a hope in which the Admiral fully participated. He writes thus on the 28th of December, 1811, when the fleet was on its way to Mahon:—

“MY DEAR BROTHER,—I would not permit a ship to sail direct for England without carrying you a few lines to say we are all well, on our way to replenish our provisions and water for the winter’s cruise: when this is done, we return to our old ground; or it is possible we may attempt to lay in Hyeres Bay, should we find the ground good for winter gales, of which at present we are not quite assured. We lay there a month in full expectation it would force the enemy to give us battle, and it will probably at last compel them to do so next spring. They are actively fortifying the islands and bay all around, in order to guard against attack, and have at least ten thousand men at work: they suspect our army will move this way. As far as we can judge from appearances, I have never yet seen a French fleet in half the order the Toulon one is. They have, I am sorry to say, adopted but too many of our arrangements, and in point of clothing, they exceed us. They also keep everybody on board, so that the French officers are now of necessity obliged to find amusement in their duty; and become acquainted with their people. The ships are magnificent; four of 120 guns, larger than *Caledonia*, and twelve fine two-deckers, are all ready and manned.



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Two of 120, and two of 80 are building, and may launch by March or April; so that I think we shall have twenty to fight, without any from Genoa, Naples, or Venice; and I trust a glorious day we shall have. Keats is a host of strength to me; and we are all well together, eager for the day, which I trust will help to put an end to the miseries of war, and the irksome eighteen years' confinement between wooden walls we have all experienced.

"God be with you ever,  
"My dear Sam,  
"Your truly affectionate brother,  
"E. PELLEW."

The hopes of the fleet were disappointed: for the enemy came out only when the wind was fair to return; and thus, though they often allowed the advanced ships to approach nearly within gunshot, nothing was, or could be done, on those occasions.

In the following week, prompted perhaps by the recollections of the new year, he again writes:—

"I never expect to live the war through, and am not at all anxious about it. If I can only have the happiness of doing service to the country, I would give a great deal to be ten years younger; but as that cannot be, I must content myself with the reflection that my children are good, and provided for; and that I leave them attached to their mother, and to each other. We have all reason to be thankful, and to praise God for his great and manifold mercies. We are ready to start at a moment's notice, and have a strict look-out. The enemy are also ready, sixteen sail, a three-decker of 140 guns launched Christmas Day.

"God bless you, and yours; and may He enable me to do honour to my country and my family—for myself, I care not."

The number of points which required to be constantly watched (for more than two thousand miles of coast, from the Ionian Islands to Gibraltar, was in the hands of the enemy), made a considerable force necessary; and the Mediterranean fleet was at this time one of the largest ever entrusted to an Admiral. The commander-in-chief, with a principal part of the line-of-battle ships, blockaded the French fleet in Toulon, cruising off that port from the beginning of March to the end of November, and sheltering in Mahon through the three winter months. A Rear-Admiral was kept at Malta, with a sufficient force under his direction to guard the different points of the station at the upper part of the Mediterranean. Another Rear-Admiral was stationed on the south coast of Spain, to watch the movements of the enemy, and to assist the Spaniards whenever they could assemble in numbers to make a stand. A third remained at Gibraltar; and a Commodore, with a ship of the line, and frigates, watched the Gulf of Genoa, and the

western coast of Italy. Frigates and small vessels were detached wherever their services became necessary.



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Knowing from his own experience what could be done by the flag-officers and captains of his fleet, he was enabled to assign to all of them their respective duties in the full confidence that they would not disappoint him. He associated much with them, and was in the habit of freely communicating his ideas, as well on general subjects connected with the movements of the fleet, as on their own personal charge. By his prompt measures, and personal attention to the repairs, victualling, and storing of the fleet, and his care to obtain ample supplies of stores and provisions from England in such good time as never to be deficient in any necessary article, he kept all the ships in a high state of equipment, and afforded at the same time an example of activity and forethought which was not lost upon his officers. He was attentive to everything which affected the discipline of the crews, and was particularly strict in enforcing regulations for constant exercise at the great guns and small arms.

How perfect was the discipline of the fleet may be inferred from the fact, that with so many ships, and on a station where the enemy had the chief part of his naval force, he lost, in three years that he held the command, not a single vessel by capture: and only one, a small gun-brig, by shipwreck. It may be added, that through almost twenty years of command in war, as Commodore and Admiral, no vessel under his orders was ever taken. Something of this may be ascribed to fortune; but more must be referred to the excellence of the officers and crews; which, when the results are so uniform, is in fact also the praise of the commander. Indeed, the superiority of the Mediterranean fleet under his command was well known, and James, in his Naval History, complaining of the dearth of good seamen on other stations, laments that "so many thousands of the very best of seamen, who, under the wise regulations of Sir Edward Pellew, were daily improving themselves in the neglected art of gunnery, should be denied the power of showing their proficiency where it was the most wanted."

He was particularly anxious to keep down the expense of the fleet, and indefatigable in his exertions to economize stores of every description, which at this time were procured from home with much difficulty. When it was found that fresh water could be obtained at the mouths of the Rhone, the fleet went there, and usually completed in forty-eight hours. He was thus enabled to discharge several transports. From the size and force of that river, the fresh water floats for a considerable distance over the sea; and at first, some of the cruisers completed their water by dipping it carefully from the surface. But on the fleet anchoring in the bay, the launches, with the armed boats to protect them, were sent up the river, where the water was not at all brackish. An arrangement was eventually made with the French General, who agreed not to molest the boats, the Admiral



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on his part promising that none of his people should be suffered to land on the marshes, or in any way to disturb the cattle grazing there, of which there were many thousands. In the strong north-west gales, so common in the Gulf of Lyons, the ships were in the practice of furling sails every night, and driving off from Toulon, standing in-shore again under easy sail when the gale moderated. During the winter months, when he sheltered in Mahon harbour, the ships had their repairs made good, and their stores and provisions completed; the Admiral being as active in the dockyard, where he would often be found at the earliest dawn of the morning, as he showed himself when afloat. Care was taken that while the fleet thus lay in harbour, it should always be ready for an immediate start if the enemy should put to sea; and two frigates, occasionally with a line-of-battle ship, were kept off Toulon to make a daily observation of the state and movements of their force. On two occasions, the in-shore frigates particularly distinguished themselves. On the 22nd of September, 1811, the *Volontaire* and *Perlen* retreated from a division of three line-of-battle ships, and two frigates, with which they were repeatedly engaged during six hours; and saved themselves through their admirable seamanship without loss: and in the following May, the *Menelaus* alone, when close in-shore, was chased by several line-of-battle ships; and though her fore-topmast was nearly cut in two by a shot from the batteries, she secured it, and escaped.

Competent masters were provided for the young gentlemen of the *Caledonia*, who were assembled every day in the Admiral's fore-cabin, and kept closely at their studies; the Admiral himself often visiting them, and interesting himself in their progress. The French and Spanish interpreters instructed them in these languages: the flag-lieutenant superintended their navigation, and that they might perfect themselves in seamanship, a frigate-built yacht of eight or ten tons was provided, upon which they were exercised in sailing, rigging and unrigging, and every part of a practical seaman's duty. All the arrangements of the ship, with regard both to officers and men, displayed consideration for their comfort and advantage. When the Admiral thoroughly knew his officers, he confided in them in their respective situations, never teasing them with interference, or disturbing himself by unnecessary watching or anxiety, after his orders had been given. The influence which he exerted on their behalf, and his great success in obtaining promotion for them, gave every one the strongest inducement to excel. He had known the anxieties of a young man forcing his way through the service without friends; and his own recollections taught him how best to assist and encourage others.



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No man could be more careful of the reputation and feelings of his officers, or more ready to suggest a plea in excuse for their errors. He had an extreme dislike to bring any of them to a court-martial, and would never resort to this painful extremity where it could with any propriety be avoided. Very few cases occurred under his command; so few, indeed, that it has even been asserted that not one took place. This it would be too much to affirm. It may be quite true that he was in no case the accuser: it certainly was his practice to prevent extreme measures wherever he could support the authority of the superior without subjecting the accused to the consequences of a public trial; and the recommendation of the commander-in chief would generally be conclusive. Still, a serious case would sometimes occur, in which it was impossible to prevent the law from taking its course. At a particular period of his command, and on a very important and critical occasion, one of his captains placed him in a position of much embarrassment, by entering without authority into a treaty with the Queen and Court of Murat. The commander-in-chief arrived very soon after, and annulled the treaty; but he spared the officer the pain of his position by charging him with the most prominent and honourable service connected with his own arrangements. In his despatches to the Admiralty on the occasion, he touches very lightly on the error, but enforces every exculpatory plea. Of the unauthorized arrangement with the enemy, he merely writes, "which I should have been glad he had never entered upon;" yet he adds, "from my conviction that he had been actuated by the purest motives, and placed in a peculiar situation. I thought it right, in acknowledging his letter, to express my approbation of his general proceedings; and in consideration of all the circumstances connected with his engagements. I gave him my sanction to," &c. He then proceeds to describe the flattering trust he had committed to this officer.

But kind as he was, he endured no relaxation of discipline, and never forgot what was due to his rank and station. His manners were formed by his character; and whenever an individual with commanding talents directs them to worthy objects, combining a proper sense of what he owes to himself with a just consideration for others, he will always, and without an effort, appear dignified and amiable: far more so in his unaffected simplicity, than the man who only assumes the character of the chief and patron, because his position requires it.

His temper was warm, the common failing of quick and active minds. No one was more conscious of it than himself; and where he feared it had given pain, he would labour to remove the impression by marked and continued attentions. In the multiplicity of cares and duties which surround a commander-in-chief, there are so many sources of irritation and disappointment, that it is no wonder the mind should sometimes be brought to that extreme point of endurance, when a small additional annoyance destroys its equanimity.



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The service in the Mediterranean was one of multiplied details, individually too unimportant for history, yet calculated to influence materially the progress and result of the war. Along the eastern coast of Spain, the support and co-operation of the ships afforded that encouragement to the inhabitants which in the western provinces they derived from the presence of the British army. Even when the fortresses had fallen, and Spain had no longer a force for a rallying point in that part of the country, the guerillas, acting in concert with the fleet, were enabled to perform exploits which alarmed and distressed the invader, and kept alive the spirit of hope and resolution. Along the shores of Italy and France, the most daring and brilliant enterprises were continually achieved. Batteries and forts were stormed in open day, and prizes, sometimes in whole convoys, carried off from anchorages where they seemed to be unassailable. Looking at the evident danger of such attempts, one is astonished at the constant success which attended them, and at the generally inconsiderable loss sustained. It would be unjust to the courage of the enemy, and still more to that of the gallant officers and men who performed such services, not to state the cause of this impunity and success. It was not that the defences on shore were feebly maintained, or that their defenders were surprised and overpowered by the reckless desperation of the assailants; but that the different boat attacks were planned with a judgment, and supported by a force, which prevented effectual resistance. Officers such as Hoste, Gordon, Rowley, Maxwell, Duncan, Ussher, and indeed all, for no commander ever placed more general and deserved confidence in his officers than Sir Edward Pellew, were not men to send away their people on doubtful and desperate services. The Admiral himself, much as he admired enterprise, strongly discouraged all acts of useless daring. He was always most unwilling to risk men's lives in boat attacks, when they could not be supported by the fire from the ships; and when his own boats were necessarily detached on service, his anxiety for their safety was very great. But the men, who saw in these successes only the daring courage which obtained, but not the considerate judgment which planned them, learned to fancy themselves invincible, and would go to what might appear a death service, as if it were an excursion of pleasure. The crew of the *Imperieuse*, who had often distinguished themselves in these attacks, petitioned their captain to remain with them, when he had been appointed to a finer ship, and offered to prove their attachment to him by taking any two French frigates they could meet. It is right to add, that their captain, a son of the great and good Lord Duncan, submitted their petition to Sir Edward Pellew, who continued him with his faithful followers. "You are a brave nation," said Napoleon at Elba to an English captain, one of Sir Edward's officers, "so are the French; but the English are individually brave." Services like these create the individual bravery which Napoleon admired.



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Still more important was the moral influence which these attacks impressed on the enemy. When the inhabitants along the southern coasts of Europe could scarcely look upon the waters without seeing an English cruiser; when they saw the apparent ease with which their strongest defences were carried; when they felt themselves at the mercy of the assailants, yet always experienced their forbearance and protection; the respect felt for an enemy so powerful and generous, taught them to desire the more earnestly their own day of deliverance from the common tyrant. And when the tremendous judgment which visited him in the Russian campaign offered the prospect of his speedy and final overthrow, every facility existed for acquainting them with the full extent of his reverses, and preparing them to avail themselves of the earliest opportunity to assert their freedom. "Affairs in these countries," says Sir Edward, in one of his letters, "look well, and promise much next summer, all over the East. Detestation, amounting to horror, is the general expression against this tyrant of the earth."

The ordinary cares and duties of his command, and his very extensive correspondence, for the number of letters he was in the habit of writing on service was almost incredible, were by no means Sir Edward's heaviest charge. Perhaps there was no ambassador on whom a greater diplomatic responsibility was imposed than on the commander in the Mediterranean. It formed by much the largest and most anxious portion of Collingwood's duties, and the greatness of the trust, the impossibility of confiding it to another than the commander on the station, and the uncommon ability with which Collingwood sustained it, gave the British Government much uneasiness when the state of that officer's health threatened to deprive them of his services. It increased materially in extent and importance after Sir Edward had succeeded to the command, when the reverses of the French in Russia opened a prospect of deliverance to all the states along the shores of the Mediterranean, including the southern provinces of France itself. Sir Edward exerted himself unceasingly to prepare them for this consummation, and to encourage them to seize the first opportunity to effect it; and the judgment he displayed in these services obtained from a British Cabinet minister the declaration, that "great as he may be as a sea-officer, he is still greater as a statesman."

One professional distinction was yet wanting, and this he anxiously desired, as a means of hastening an honourable peace, and on personal grounds, perhaps, to connect his name with the history of his country—to command in a general action. Though the enemy had shrunk from meeting him, as he expected when he first assumed the command, yet, while they continued to build ships of the largest class, and to keep their fleet always ready for sea, he could not but hope that they only waited for a favourable opportunity to try



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the fortune of their flag. At the end of 1811 there were sixteen sail of the line in Toulon. Two others were launched next year, and by the close of 1813 there were twenty-two, of which six were three-deckers of the largest size. Sir Edward gave them every opportunity, and every prudent advantage, but he never could induce them to attack him. They had been forbidden to engage, and the Emperor had hitherto seen nothing to induce him to recall the order. Thus, though they were kept in a state of high equipment through the whole period of Sir Edward's command, they never ventured far beyond the protection of the batteries; and came out only when they had a leading wind to return.

The restoration of his fleet was a favourite ulterior object with Napoleon; and if a different result of the Russian campaign had placed the resources of Europe at his command, there is no doubt but that the days of St. Vincent and Trafalgar would have been renewed. There was an English officer who was much in his presence and confidence at Elba, and to whom he proposed the most flattering inducements to enter his service. "I am honoured by your Majesty's offer," was the reply, "but I was born an Englishman." Conversing with him on naval affairs, he one day said, "I would have had two hundred sail of the line, and when I brought against you such a force, you must have been crushed." But the officer soon convinced him that the tactics which he had made so effectual on land, by concentrating an overwhelming force upon his enemy, were not applicable to naval operations. Sailors are made but slowly. It requires an able commander to direct twenty ships, and the most skilful could scarcely manoeuvre forty. Dark nights and gales would disperse the unwieldy armada, and a small, but well managed force, would hang upon it and destroy it in detail. The Emperor saw the force of the objections, and closed the conversation with the compliment already related.

Once, towards the end of the war, an opportunity seemed to be offered by which the enemy might be compelled to sacrifice part of his fleet, or to risk a general battle. On the morning of November 5th. 1813, the French fleet had sailed out of Toulon with the wind at E.S.E., and advanced to a greater distance than usual, when the wind suddenly shifted to south-west. Immediately the enemy made every exertion to work back to their harbour. The main body of the British fleet was just in sight to the southward, and an advanced squadron of four sail, with a fifth at no great distance, was about half-way between the two fleets. This squadron lay up for the enemy under all sail, with every appearance of being able to cut off the rear ships, the *Wagram* of 130 guns, with four two-deckers and four frigates. On the approach of the British, the enemy tacked, and stood in so close, that many thought they intended to run themselves on shore; but they again tacked off to the southward, and the advanced squadrons stood on with every prospect of



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passing to windward of them. Unfortunately, as the British ships approached, the wind headed them, and threw them off so much, that they only fetched just within gun-shot of the *Wagram*, the enemy's rear ship. The fleet was at this time bringing up the original wind, and the *Caledonia*, *San Josef*, and *Boyne*, actually fetched within gun-shot of the French Admiral, before the wind headed them. The *Wagram*, which had reserved her fire for the *Caledonia*, exchanged broadsides with her, but at too great a distance to produce material effect; and the enemy being so far to windward, succeeded in reaching Toulon. Eleven shots from the *Wagram* and the batteries struck the *Caledonia*, wounding the mainmast, cutting some of the shrouds, and destroying a small boat upon the booms. Much disappointment was felt by all the fleet, and the conduct of the advanced squadron was strongly censured by many in the ships astern, who supposed that they had intentionally bore away, when in fact they had come up within influence of the head wind.

A more serious, though very partial affair occurred in the following February. On the evening of the 12th, Rear-Admiral Kosmao Kerjulien sailed from Toulon, with three sail of the line, and three frigates, to escort a seventy-four which was expected from Genoa. On the following morning, the fleet returning from Mahon, discovered the enemy to the eastward of Hyeres Islands. They were at first supposed to be British ships, but the Admiral himself going aloft, clearly made out their character. The *Boyne*, Captain Burlton, a small three-decker, sister ship to the *Victory*, was considerably in advance of the fleet. It was on Sunday, and the ships were preparing for the morning service, which had already commenced on board the *Boyne*, when the signal for a general chase was thrown out. The wind blew strong from E.S.E., and the *Boyne*, perceiving the enemy's intention to come through the little pass of Hyeres Bay, stood for that pass to intercept them. Sir Edward, who was leaning on the foreyard, watched her with admiration, but extreme anxiety. "Hold on, my brave Burlton!" he exclaimed, as the *Boyne* dashed at their whole force. Then, as he feared they would all close, and overpower her before he could arrive to her assistance, he turned to an officer at his side, and declared with energy, "If they take her they sha'nt keep her, for I'll go in with the fleet!"

Passing through the enemy immediately astern of a frigate, to which she gave a broadside, the *Boyne* separated the rear-ship from the others, and brought her to action. This ship, the *Romulus*, a two-decker, immediately hauled in for the north shore, and kept so close, going round all the bays, that the *Boyne* could neither run her on board, nor get inside her. They ran side by side with studding sails set, and at the rate of ten knots, before the wind, which blew directly into Toulon.



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Once it was thought that the *Romulus* was aground, as she luffed up to the wind, which brought all her sails aback, and her starboard lower studding-sail in upon the gangway. The *Boyne* also backed her sails, and continued close to the enemy; but the *Romulus* paying off, and filling again, continued to run alongshore, and when she reached Cape Brun, at the entrance of the harbour, had gained on the *Boyne*. The *Caledonia* had by this time come up, and the Admiral waved to Captain Burlton to haul his wind to the southward. The *Boyne* tacked accordingly, being then within pistol shot of Cape Brun battery; and the *Caledonia* fired a broadside at the *Romulus*, as she ran in to join her consorts in the harbour. The *Caledonia* then gave the *Boyne* three hearty cheers, and Captain Burlton received the thanks of the commander-in-chief by signal.

Napoleon was now contending for existence on the soil of France, and the remains of his former conquests were rapidly melting from him. In the course of January and February, every place in the Adriatic had surrendered. In the following month, Lord William Bentinck left Palermo with an army, supported by a squadron under Commodore J. Rowley, to reduce Genoa. The advanced guard was landed considerably to the eastward, and moved forward, supported by the squadron, carrying and dismantling the batteries as they advanced. On the 30th, the defences round the Gulf of Spezzia capitulated. On the 13th of April, the army was landed at Recce, in the Gulf of Genoa; and at day-break on the 17th, a joint attack was made by the land and sea forces on the defences around the place. These were carried in the course of the day; and preparations were in progress to attack the town, when Sir Edward Pellew arrived with several line-of battle ships. The governor, already alarmed at the rapid progress of the assailants, capitulated, and the town was taken possession of next morning. Four gun-brigs, and a number of merchant vessels were found in the mole; and the *Brilliant*, a fine seventy-four on the stocks, was launched, and still remains in the navy under the appropriate name of the *Genoa*.

Paris had already capitulated; and on the 28th of this month, Napoleon left France in a British frigate for Elba. He landed on the 3rd of May on the little island which had been assigned to him for a sovereignty, and a prison: and thus ended a war, one of the longest, the most dreadful, but in all respects the most glorious, which England had ever waged.

## CHAPTER X.

### SECOND MEDITERRANEAN COMMAND.

The contest for naval supremacy was so entirely decided by the battle of Trafalgar, that no opportunity was afterwards afforded for great successes. But at the end of the war, when the leading Peninsular generals were raised to the peerage, it was thought due to

the service to confer a similar distinction upon a naval officer. Sir Edward Pellew received this mark of his sovereign's favour. He was created Baron Exmouth, of Canonteign, a mansion and estate in the South of Devon which he had purchased for a family property; and the pension was settled on him which is usually granted when a peerage is conferred for eminent public services.



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He was still in the Mediterranean when the news of his elevation reached him, and he received the first account of it from a newspaper. In allusion to it, he writes:—"I was never more surprised than at this event. Never was man more ignorant of its being thought of; much less reason had I to expect it; and it has happened only by a combination of events quite unconnected with influence or power. I had some reason to believe a red ribbon was intended, and — wrote that it had been granted; but if so, it was changed next day to what it is, which, for the sake of our family, I hope will be useful and respectable. For myself I am indifferent, and know it will only tend to multiply my enemies, and increase my difficulties." ... In the course of this year, he received a handsome compliment from the officers of the Mediterranean fleet. It is a beautiful model of the Warwick vase, executed by Messrs. Rundel and Bridge, at a cost of 580 guineas, and bears the following inscription:—"Presented to the Right Honourable Admiral Lord Exmouth, &c., &c., &c., as a mark of their respect and esteem, by the officers who served under his Lordship's command in the Mediterranean."

At the beginning of the next year, when the order of the Bath was extended, he was included among the knights commanders; and was afterwards advanced on an early vacancy to be a grand cross. The former was entirely unexpected, as he knew nothing of the intention to extend the order. He thus begins a letter to his brother on the 5th of January:—"I seize this moment, when the arrival of the post has brought me the enclosed without one single line from any friend I have on earth: possibly, it was owing to the lateness of the nomination. I had not the most distant idea of this event, and I can only account for its coming to me by the squabbling of parties ... to end which, it was probably decided on giving it to the commander-in-chief. On this ground only can I account for it, as it was by no means necessary to add this, which was once considered due to me as a reward of sufficient magnitude, without any other.

"6th January, 1815.—I had written the above before any gazette reached me, which explains the whole. But as it shows my heart and mind to you without reserve, and as I can call God to witness, that I never in my life kept anything from you. I send it.—May God bless you."

He had remained but a few months in England, when, on the renewal of hostilities consequent on the return of Napoleon from Elba, he was sent back to the Mediterranean. Hoisting his flag in the *Boyne*, and again with his brother, Sir Israel, as captain of the fleet, he hastened to his station. His services were first required at Naples, which he was so happy as to save from all the horrors of anarchy. Murat, that he might create a diversion in favour of Napoleon, had rashly attacked Austria, and thus violated the compact by which he was allowed to hold his usurped throne.



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What followed scarcely deserves the name of war. His army, not waiting for the enemy to approach, fled like sheep, and left the Austrian commander an unresisted march to Naples. Lord Exmouth, after having arranged with Lord W. Bentinck for the co-operation of the forces from Sicily with the allies, had arrived on the evening of the 18th of May, at Civita Vecchia, whence, on learning the rapid advance of the Austrians, he proceeded without delay for Naples, where he anchored on the evening of the 20th. Madame Murat embarked the same night on board a British seventy-four, and immediately wrote to Lord Exmouth, requesting that he would take measures for the security and peace of the city. No capital in Europe contains within itself more formidable elements for popular tumult; and upon this occasion, the mob, excited by the general confusion, and not restrained by any adequate authority, were proceeding to the last excesses of rapine and violence. Lord Exmouth was not slow to take the steps which such an emergency required. On the morning after his arrival, he landed the marines, who took possession of the forts, and the castle of St. Elmo, and conjointly with the civic guard, restored, and maintained order. On the 23rd, the Austrian army entered the city, and next day the forts were delivered up, and the marines embarked. The king, Ferdinand, was unbounded in his expressions of gratitude, and invested him on the spot with his highest order.

After having concluded some very difficult and delicate negotiations respecting the queen and court of Murat, who were eventually sent to Trieste, Lord Exmouth proposed to General Bianci, to embark a few thousand men, and make a dash at Toulon. Unfortunately, the instructions of the Austrian commander would not allow him to join in such an expedition. The squadron therefore sailed for Leghorn, where it landed the first division of the Austrian army, and thence proceeded to Genoa. Accounts received on the 3rd of July of the situation of affairs on the coast of Provence determined Lord Exmouth, in concert with Sir Hudson Lowe, to embark 3,000 men, part of the garrison of Genoa, consisting of the 14th, and two Italian regiments, and including 200 artillery and cavalry, with which he sailed direct for Marseilles. Here the troops were landed, with a body of seamen, and the marines of the squadron, and stopped the advance of the rebel Marshal Brune, who was marching from Toulon upon Marseilles avowedly to destroy it. The inhabitants, grateful to their preservers, were unceasing in their attentions, both to the fleet and army, as long as they remained in the place. Their sense of the important services which the two commanders had rendered, as well to their city, as to the cause of their rightful sovereign, was marked by the present to each of a large and beautiful piece of plate, which was executed at Paris. On the base of that presented to Lord Exmouth is a medallion of the noble Admiral; and a view of the port of Marseilles, with the *Boyne*, his flagship, entering in full sail. It bears the simple and expressive inscription,—“*A l'Amiral mi Lord Exmouth, la ville de Marseilles reconnoissante.*”



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The squadron wintered in Leghorn roads, being detained in the Mediterranean for instructions, which were delayed for some time, through the magnitude of the negotiations then in progress. At the beginning of 1816, Lord Exmouth was ordered to proceed to the different Barbary powers, to claim the release of all the Ionian slaves, who, by the late political arrangements, had become British subjects: and to make peace for Sardinia. These were to be matters of compulsion; but he was also to make peace for any of the other states in the Mediterranean who would authorize him to do so. Naples readily availed herself of his offer. Unable to protect herself, it was to her an inestimable blessing to gain security from such a dreadful scourge on the easiest terms which the influence of the first maritime power could obtain for her. Nothing can be conceived more horrible than the condition of the Christian slaves, subjected as they were, in countries where no law gave protection, to all the caprice and cruelty of masters, who hated and despised them for their faith. Nor was it a small aggravation of their misery, that as Roman Catholics, they were cut off from the observance of rites which they deemed essential. To the fear and danger of being reduced to this miserable condition was the maritime population of the states around the Mediterranean continually exposed: while the great naval powers, deterred from exterminating these pirates, either by more pressing concerns, or by the failure of the different expeditions which had attempted it, purchased a discreditable security by presents.

Lord Exmouth afterwards visited Rome; but the Pope declined the offer of his services, perhaps from difficulties arising out of religious scruples at confiding a formal trust to a Protestant. He received the Admiral, however, with the utmost courtesy, and even attended to his request upon a subject where it was scarcely to have been expected that the interference of a Protestant would be allowed. A young Spanish lady, who was confined in a convent at Minorca, under circumstances of an oppressive and distressing nature, had contrived to bring her case to the knowledge of Lord Exmouth, and to place in his hands a memorial, which he took an opportunity to deliver personally to the Pope. A British admiral interceding with the Pope for a Spanish nun was a novel occurrence; but Pius VII. received the memorial very graciously, and placed it in the hands of Gonsalvi that proper inquiries might be made. It is satisfactory to add, that Lord Exmouth received a letter a few months after, informing him that the poor girl's prayer to be set at liberty had been complied with.

Before he took any steps in fulfilment of his instructions he made the arrangements necessary for an attack, which was to be the alternative if negotiations failed; a result much to be expected at Algiers, which had hitherto withstood so many formidable armaments. He ordered Captain Warde, of the *Banterer*, to proceed to Algiers, where he was carefully to observe the town and the nature of its defences. Lord Exmouth's instructions on this occasion, and which were written with his own hand, afford an admirable illustration of the forethought with which he provided for every contingency, and which was the chief secret of his constant success.



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It were injustice to Captain Warde to state how he performed this difficult and important service in any language but that of the Admiral. In his despatch which accompanied the treaty made with Tripoli, and which he sent to the Admiralty when proceeding on his second visit to Algiers, he writes:—"Previous to my leaving Leghorn, I despatched Captain Warde in the *Banterer* to Algiers, to make his observations on the anchorage and sea-defences, which service he performed with entire secrecy and judgment, and highly to my satisfaction. The accompanying plan of the works, with his remarks after visiting all the forts and arsenal, I found correct in every respect; and when it is considered that he had not the means of taking angles, but was compelled to pace the distances, and trust much to his recollection, to avoid being suspected, I think him deserving of the highest commendation. The soundings round the mole, and the bay to the N.W. of the lighthouse, were all made by him personally in the night without discovery; nor did even the consul suspect the purport of his visit."

Indeed, Captain Warde played the careless idler to perfection. He escorted the ladies of the consul's family everywhere by day, and danced with them in the evenings, covering a keen and constant observation with the appearance of frivolity; while at night he was silently moving outside the port in a boat, taking the soundings with a pole.

It adds to the merit of this officer, that all the previous plans of Algiers were so incorrect, that he was obliged to begin his own from the outlines, as if the place were a new discovery. Lord Exmouth afterwards declared that if he had proceeded to hostilities at his first visit, without having been furnished with Captain Warde's plan and observations, he should have assigned to the ships stations which they could not have occupied. The plan in the Admiralty book of charts, among other inaccuracies, laid down the sea-face of the city as four miles long, instead of one; omitted the bay to the north-west of the lighthouse; represented the pier on which the strong fortifications are built as quite straight from the lighthouse in a southerly direction, whereas it forms a quarter of the compass, bending round to the south-west, or towards the city; and laid the distance between the piers at the entrance of the mole, a mile, instead of sixty, or sixty-five fathoms. Notwithstanding this, and his great disadvantages arising out of the secrecy he was compelled to observe, Captain Warde's observations were so accurate and complete, that Lord Exmouth afterwards sent to the Admiralty his original plan, to illustrate the despatches of the battle.

Thus prepared for every alternative, Lord Exmouth, on the 21st of March, made known to the squadron the service upon which they were proceeding in the following General Order:—

"The Commander-in-Chief embraces the earliest moment in which he could inform the fleet of his destination, without inconvenience to the public service.



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“He has been instructed and directed by his Royal Highness the Prince Regent, to proceed with the fleet to Algiers, and there make certain arrangements for diminishing at least the piratical excursions of the Barbary states by which thousands of our fellow-creatures, innocently following their commercial pursuits, have been dragged into the most wretched and revolting state of slavery. “The Commander-in-Chief is confident that this outrageous system of piracy and slavery rouses in common the same spirit of indignation which he himself feels; and should the government of Algiers refuse the reasonable demands he bears from the Prince Regent, he doubts not but the flag will be honourably and zealously supported by every officer and man under his command, in his endeavours to procure the acceptation of them by force; and if force must be resorted to, we have the consolation of knowing that we fight in the sacred cause of humanity, and cannot fail of success. “These arrangements being made at Algiers and Tunis, the Commander-in-Chief announces with pleasure that he is ordered to proceed with all the ships not on the peace establishment to Spithead without delay, except the *Bombay*, bearing the flag of Rear-Admiral Sir Charles Penrose, which ship is to be relieved by the *Albion*, daily expected.

(Signed) “EXMOUTH.

“N.B. This General Memorandum to be entered in the public order-book, and communicated to the respective officers, seamen, and marines of the fleet.”

The squadron went in the first place to Algiers, where Lord Exmouth obtained the objects of his mission without difficulty. The Ionian slaves were freely released as British subjects; and peace was made for Naples and Sardinia, the former paying a ransom of five hundred, the latter of three hundred dollars a head. The fleet then sailed for Tunis, where accident gave an entirely new character to the subsequent proceedings. Lord Exmouth had directed the interpreter to tell the Bey, that it would be very agreeable to the Prince Regent if slavery were abolished; but the interpreter, by mistake, said that the Prince Regent had determined to abolish it. Upon this the negotiation was suspended, and the Divan assembled. Lord Exmouth soon became aware of the mistake, and availing himself of the important advantage which it gave him, he allowed them two hours for deliberation, and retired to the consul’s house to await the result. Before the time expired he was sent for, and informed that the Divan had deliberated on his proposal, and would comply with it. Proceeding to Tripoli, he made a similar demand, and it was there submitted to without hesitation.



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In the mean time, he had received instructions to claim from Algiers the privilege of selling prizes, and refitting privateers in that port, which had lately been granted by treaty to America. Returning on this errand, he took the opportunity to press, as at the other Regencies, the abolition of Christian slavery; but here he had a more formidable power to deal with. His demand was refused; and when he hinted at the alternative of force, the Dey answered as a man confident in his strength to resist it. Lord Exmouth assured him that he formed a very inadequate idea of a British man of-war, and declared, that if hostilities should become necessary, he would engage with five line-of-battle ships to destroy the place. A very sharp altercation ensued; and Lord Exmouth left the Divan, giving them two hours to consider his proposal. When the time expired, he took Mr. M'Donell, the consul, and walked with him towards the boat; but they were stopped at the gate. After a communication had been made to the Dey, Lord Exmouth was allowed to pass on, but the consul was detained, on the pretext that money was due from Portugal, for which, as well as for England, Mr. M'Donell was accredited. The whole party had been in the greatest danger. The crowd who surrounded them discussed aloud the question of putting them all to death; and the conduct of the captain of the port was extremely suspicious. He was observed to cock his pistol, and Sir Israel Pellow exclaiming, "At least we'll die with arms in our hands!" attempted to draw his sword. Happily, the pressure of the throng prevented him; for in the temper which then prevailed, the appearance of a hostile movement would probably have been fatal. Lord Exmouth was much irritated at this outrage; and when one of the principal officers of state followed, and asked him, as he was just stepping into the boat, to allow them two days to consider his proposal, he replied with warmth "No, not two hours!" Hastening on board, he got the fleet under weigh to attack the place immediately; but the wind was too strong to allow the ships to take their stations, and they were obliged to anchor again.

Two British officers, Captains Pechell and Warde, had gone on shore, not anticipating a hostile movement. They were seized by the people, who dragged them off their horses, rifled their pockets, tied their hands behind them, and in this state marched them through the town to the Dey. But when they reached the palace they were immediately released; and except some trifling articles, which could not be found, all their property was restored. After two or three interviews with the Dey, the object of which appeared to be to investigate the cause of a cut which Captain Pechell had received in the hand, when he was taken off the horse, they were allowed to go to their ships. Such conduct, at a moment when Lord Exmouth was evidently preparing to attack the place, indicated an irresolution which might enable him to gain his object without a



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battle; and next morning, as a calm, with a heavy swell, prevented the fleet from moving, he sent Captain Dundas, of the *Tagus*, with renewed proposals. The result was, that Sir Israel Pellew, with Captains Brisbane, Pechell, Dundas, Warde, and others, went on shore; and the Dey agreed to appoint an ambassador, who should proceed first to Constantinople for the sanction of the Porte, and thence to England to treat on Lord Exmouth's proposal. It may be supposed that the Admiral would not have endured this evasion, had he been authorised to act; but he had pressed the demand without instructions, and felt that he would not be justified in resorting to force, if it could be creditably avoided. He was not even certain that his conduct in thus pressing the abolition of slavery would be favourably received; for it was a common remark, that the obstructions to the navigation of the Mediterranean, created by the Barbary corsairs, were advantageous to British commerce. He expressed this doubt in a letter which he sent on shore on the 23rd of June, when the fleet had arrived in the channel:—"It is with great delight I again bring myself nearer to you and the rest of my family, after a longer absence than I had any reason to expect when I left England, and which has at last ended without realizing that for which it was said we were kept so long abroad after peace was signed. I had anxiously hoped I should have been directed to enforce the abandonment of their cruel system of retaining Christians who fell into their hands (in what they term war) in slavery. I hope I have made the path easy for the Government, having obtained by my own exertions the relinquishment from two States, and a promise to treat on that point from the most violent, Algiers, after discussions which did not promise sometimes amicable terminations. But I intreat you to observe the utmost silence on this point, as it may lead me into an awkward situation; for I have acted solely on my own responsibility, and without orders; the causes and reasoning on which, upon general principles, may be defensible, but as applying to our own country, may not be borne out, the old mercantile interest being against it."

Four days previous to the date of this letter, Mr. Brougham had moved in the House of Commons for copies of Lord Exmouth's treaties with Algiers for Naples and Sardinia, and for all the correspondence connected with them. He condemned the principle upon which the treaties had been conducted, because, by ransoming the slaves, we had virtually acknowledged the right of these parties to commit their depredations. He understood that the Algerines, dissatisfied with the Dey for having limited their sphere of plunder, had been pacified only by the assurance, that though restrained from cruising against Neapolitan subjects, there still remained a wide field for their enterprise. The Roman States had already felt the effect of the new direction given to their piracies. He then



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described the wretched condition of the slaves. In one case, out of three hundred prisoners, fifty had died of ill-treatment on the first day of their arrival, and seventy during the first fortnight. The rest were kept in the most miserable condition, being allowed only a pound of bread a day, and subject to the lash from morning to night. No age, no sex was spared. A Neapolitan lady of distinction, carried off with eight children, six of whom survived, had lately been seen by a British officer in the thirteenth year of her captivity. That it might be seen we did not countenance such proceedings, it was necessary to ascertain what use we had made of our influence in the late negotiations.

The minister objected to the motion, only however on the ground that all the documents necessary to afford complete information had not yet arrived; and he assured the House, that the cause of humanity had been very materially served by the proceedings of the squadron. An animated debate followed, in which every one expressed the utmost anxiety that the barbarians should be compelled, and by force, if necessary, to relinquish their piracies. This unanimous display of feeling in the House of Commons, ensured to Lord Exmouth full approval of all that he had done, and enabled the Government to take the decisive step which immediately after became necessary. It is, indeed, a subject for just pride, that upon every national question, the feelings of the people have never hesitated to throw themselves upon the side of humanity and justice, however seemingly opposed to their own interest.

Lord Exmouth had not yet reached England, when accounts arrived which determined the Government not to await the issue of the proposed negotiations with Algiers, but at once to exact the most ample satisfaction and security. On the 23rd of May, the crews of the coral fishing-vessels at Bona had landed to attend mass, it being Ascension-day, when they were attacked by a large body of Turkish troops, and most barbarously massacred. Lord Exmouth was at Algiers when this took place; but as Bona is two hundred miles to the eastward, and he sailed as soon as he had agreed with the Dey, he did not hear of it until he arrived in England; and thus it devolved upon the British Government to direct the measures which such an atrocity demanded. Justly concluding that these barbarians, so long the common enemies of the civilized world, and whose very existence was a reproach to it, had filled the measure of their crimes by this last bloody outrage, they determined to exact complete submission, or to inflict the most signal vengeance. They appointed Lord Exmouth to complete his work, and placed at his disposal whatever force he thought necessary to effect it.

## CHAPTER XI.

### THE BATTLE OF ALGIERS.



The town of Algiers is built on the declivity of a hill fronting to the eastward. It is of a triangular form, having for its base the sea-front, which is about a mile in length, and rises directly from the water. It is strongly fortified on the land side, and the sea defences are most formidable, as well from the great thickness of the walls, as the number of heavy guns.



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The harbour is artificial. A broad straight pier, three hundred yards in length, and upon which the storehouses were built, projects from a point about a quarter of a mile from the north extremity of the town. A mole is carried from the end of this pier, which bends in a south-westerly direction towards the town, forming nearly a quarter of a circle. Opposite the mole-head is a small insulated pier, which leaves the entrance to the harbour about a hundred and twenty yards wide. The rock upon which the mole is built extends about two hundred yards to the N.E. beyond the angle at which the pier joins it. The shores recede considerably from the base of the pier, forming a small bay on either side of it.

All the works around the harbour were covered with the strongest fortifications. Immediately beyond the pier-head stood the Lighthouse battery, a large circular fort, mounting between sixty and seventy guns, in three tiers. At the extremity of the point of rock beyond the lighthouse was a very heavy battery, of two tiers, mounting thirty guns and seven mortars in the upper. The mole itself was filled with cannon, like the side of a line-of-battle ship, mostly disposed in a double tier, with ports below, and embrasures above; but the eastern batteries, next the light-house, had an inner fortification, with a third tier of guns, making sixty-six in these batteries alone. All these batteries had together above two hundred and twenty guns—eighteen, twenty-four, and thirty-two pounders; besides two, at least sixty-eight pounders, and upwards of twenty feet long. On the sea wall of the town were nine batteries; two at the southern extremity; then the Fish-market battery in three tiers, bearing three hundred yards west of the molehead; three between the Fish-market and the gate leading to the mole; one over this gate; and two on the wall beyond it. Along the shore, within twelve hundred yards south of the town, were three batteries, and a very heavy fort. Another large fort, and six batteries, commanded the bay to the N.W. Many guns in other parts of the fortifications of the town, and in forts and batteries on the hills around it, were in situations which enabled them to fire upon ships. Altogether, the approaches by sea were defended by scarcely less than five hundred guns.

The Admiralty were greatly surprised when Lord Exmouth proposed to attack these works with five sail of the line. Many naval officers who were consulted by the Board considered them unassailable. Nelson, in a conversation with Captain Brisbane, had named twenty-five line-of-battle ships as the force which would be required to attack them. The opinion was not founded upon his own observation, and he was evidently misled by the errors in the received plans; for that number of ships could not have been placed before the town; but it marks his sense of the great danger in attacking powerful batteries with ships, and of the tremendous strength of Algiers. Lord



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Exmouth was offered any force he required, but he adhered to his first demand; for he had satisfied himself that five ships could destroy the fortifications on the Mole as effectually as a greater number, and with far more safety to themselves. After he had fully explained his plans, and marked the position which every ship was to occupy, the Admiralty allowed him to act upon his own judgment; though they found it not easy to believe that the force was equal to the service; nor were persons wanting to remark that he had at length involved himself in a difficulty, from which he would not escape with credit. His own confidence never wavered. "All will go well," he wrote, "as far at least as it depends on me." As he was going down Channel, he said to his brother, who accompanied him as far as Falmouth, "If they open their fire when the ships are coming up, and cripple them in the masts, the difficulty and loss will be greater; but if they allow us to take our stations, I am sure of them; for I know that nothing can resist a line-of-battle ship's fire." He wrote to the Admiralty before he left England, declaring himself fully satisfied with all the arrangements, and taking on himself the responsibility of the result.

He was scarcely appointed, when officers came forward in crowds to offer their services. On the 29th of June, only six days after he arrived in the Channel, he writes—"Government has taken a very proper view of the subject, and has determined to send out a proper force. I immediately said, it was my duty to finish that which I had begun, and that I should cheerfully go. My offer is accepted, and I embark in the *Queen Charlotte*, with *Impregnable*, and others. The only delay will be want of men; but I hope they will be induced by the offers made, to volunteer for the service, to be rewarded after it." On the 4th of July, he says, "I have refused Israel, Pownoll, Fleetwood, Harward, and both Admiral and Captain Halsted,[12] volunteers. Even Lord Spencer brought his son, and a hundred others."

With very few exceptions, the officers were selected by the Admiralty. It was understood that Sir Charles Penrose would be the second in command, his appointment at that time as commander-in-chief in the Mediterranean entitling him to the preference. He was very highly valued by Lord Exmouth, under whom he had served with the *Cleopatra* in the western squadron. It was intended that despatches should be sent in time to enable him to join the expedition; but greatly to the disappointment of both officers, the information was received too late.



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Lord Exmouth persisted in refusing all his relations. The motive of duty, which was imperative on himself, applied to none of them; and all were anxious to go. For himself, he might well trust that the Providence which had shielded him forty years, for so long was it since he had fought the *Carleton* on Lake Champlain, would guard him in the approaching battle; or, if he were doomed to fall in what might truly be deemed a holy war, he had a better confidence than the pride of a hero, or even the self-devotedness of a patriot. Before he sailed, he made every arrangement which his death would render necessary; and among others, wrote a letter for his eldest son, chiefly on the subject of the duties which would devolve upon him as a British nobleman, and which he designed for his last injunctions. The existence of this letter was not known until some time after his death, when it was found among his papers.

The Admiralty would not send back the squadron which had just returned from the Mediterranean, probably thinking it right that ships going expressly to fight a severe battle should be manned with volunteers. This decision greatly increased his difficulties. Naval officers seldom think a ship effective until she has been some time in commission. Within two months, Lord Exmouth commissioned, fitted, and manned a fleet, and fought the battle.

As soon as he had completed his first arrangements at the Admiralty, he hastened to Portsmouth, where the *Boyne*, his flag-ship, was lying with her consorts. He went on board as soon as he arrived, and there was not a little excitement when the Admiral was seen coming alongside at a very early hour in the morning. He mustered the ship's company on deck, and having read to them the Admiralty letter, invited them to join him; but at that time scarcely a man came forward. They were unwilling to enter for a new service until they had enjoyed some liberty on shore; but after they had been paid off, and spent their money, numbers of them volunteered, and many more would probably have done so, but for the very short time in which the crews were completed. No difficulty was experienced in manning the fleet. The whole ship's company of the *Leander*, then on the point of sailing as the flag-ship on the North American station, volunteered to go, and accordingly her destination was changed for the time. Rear-Admiral Milne, for whom she had been fitted, obtained permission to go out with her; and as Sir Charles Penrose did not join at Gibraltar, he hoisted his flag in the *Impregnable*, as second in command. Among other volunteers were a number of smugglers, who had been taken on the western coast, and sentenced to five years' service in the navy. They were sent to the eastward as prisoners in a cutter in which Mr. Pellew had taken a passage to make a parting visit to his brother, and they implored his intercession on their behalf. He advised them to enter for the *Queen Charlotte*, and gain a title to the indulgence they sought by their good conduct in the battle. They all did so: no serious casualty occurred among them, and they behaved so well that Lord Exmouth applied to the Admiralty, and obtained their discharge.



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Lord Exmouth's marine officer in the *Arethusa*, the late Sir Richard Williams, then commanded the marine artillery, and Lord Exmouth wrote to request that he would aid him to the best of his abilities, by selecting officers and men from his corps. Sir Richard displayed on this occasion all the activity and judgment to be expected from his character, and Lord Exmouth acknowledged his services after the glorious result of the expedition, in the following words:—"I should be very ungrateful, my dear friend, if I neglected to thank you for the care and pains you took in selecting, for the service I was ordered upon, the best officers and men I ever saw during my service. I assure you that all the officers did you full justice: they not only knew their duty well, but they performed it well."

In addition to the five line-of-battle ships, two of which were three-deckers, the force included three heavy frigates, and two smaller ones; four bomb vessels, and five gun-brigs. Four of the line-of-battle ships were to destroy the fortifications on the Mole; while the fifth covered them from the batteries south of the town, and the heavy frigates, from those on the town wall. The bomb-vessels were to fire on the arsenal and town, assisted by a flotilla of the ships' launches, &c., fitted as gun, rocket, and mortar-boats. The smaller frigates and the brigs were to assist as circumstances might require.

The fleet left Portsmouth on the 25th of July. On the 28th it sailed from Plymouth Sound, and the same afternoon was off Falmouth. Twenty three years before, Lord Exmouth had gone from the house of his brother, who now took leave of him, and sailed to fight the first battle of the war from the port whence he was proceeding on the service which was to close and crown it. From this place the *Minded*, 74, was sent on to Gibraltar, that the necessary supplies might be ready when the fleet arrived. Through all the passage the utmost care was taken to train the crews. Every day, Sunday excepted, they were exercised at the guns; and on Tuesdays and Fridays the fleet cleared for action, when each ship fired six broadsides. On board the *Queen Charlotte* a twelve-pounder was secured at the after part of the quarter-deck, with which the first and second captains of the guns practised daily at a small target, hung at the fore topmast studding-sail boom. The target was a frame of laths, three feet square, crossed with rope-yarns so close that a twelve-pound shot could not go through without cutting one, and with a piece of wood, the size and shape of a bottle, for a bull's-eye. After a few days' practice, the target was never missed, and on an average ten or twelve bottles were hit every day. Thus kept in constant preparation for the battle, and daily gaining new confidence in themselves, the crews were in the highest degree elated. Officers and men felt they were going to an assured victory, and that to obtain complete success the plans of their chief



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required only the exertions which every one resolved to make. As a consequence of this enthusiasm, which never had a check, for the excitement of preparation was followed by the flush of victory, their health and vigour were beyond all parallel. Scarcely a man came on the sick-list; and when the *Queen Charlotte* was paid off on her return, only one had died, except from the casualties of battle, out of nearly a thousand who had joined her more than three months before.

On the 9th of August, the fleet reached Gibraltar, where the *Minden* had arrived only the preceding night. Here they found a Dutch squadron of five frigates and a corvette, commanded by Vice-Admiral the Baron Von de Capellan, who, on learning the object of the expedition, solicited and obtained leave to co-operate. The ships, having completed their ordnance stores and provisions, were ready to sail on the 12th; but the strong easterly wind prevented them from moving for two days. On the 13th, every ship received a plan of the fortifications, with full instructions respecting the position she was to occupy. A general order to this effect had been issued on the 6th, but the co-operation of the Dutch squadron had made some change in the arrangements necessary. To this squadron was assigned the duty of attacking the fort and batteries south of the town, a service previously intended for the *Minden* and *Hebrus*, which were now to take a position among their consorts in front of the Mole.

The fleet sailed next day, and on the 16th was within two hundred miles of its destination, when the wind again shifted to the eastward. That evening the ship-sloop *Prometheus*, Captain Dashwood, joined direct from Algiers, with information that the Algerines were making every preparation to meet the attack. All the former defences had been made completely effective, and new works had been added; forty thousand troops had been assembled; all the Janizaries called in from distant garrisons; and the whole naval force of the regency, four frigates, five large corvettes, and thirty-seven gun-boats, were collected in the harbour. The *Prometheus* brought the wife, daughter, and infant child of Mr. M'Donell, the British consul. The two former had succeeded in getting off, disguised as midshipmen; but the infant, which had been carefully concealed in a basket, after a composing medicine had been given to it by the surgeon of the *Prometheus*, awoke, and cried as it was passing the gateway, and thus led to the arrest of all the party then on shore. The child was sent off next morning by the Dey, and, "as a solitary instance of his humanity," said Lord Exmouth, "it ought to be recorded by me;" but the consul was confined in irons at his house, and the surgeon, three midshipmen, and fourteen seamen of the *Prometheus*, were detained as prisoners; nor could the most urgent remonstrances of Captain Dashwood induce the Dey to release them.



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The fleet continued beating against a head wind until midnight on the 24th, when the wind shifted to south-west. On Monday the 20th, at noon, they made Cape Cazzina, the northern point of the Bay of Algiers, and about twenty miles from the town. Next morning at daybreak, Algiers itself was in sight. As the ships lay nearly becalmed, Lord Exmouth sent away Lieutenant Burgess in one of the *Queen Charlotte's* boats, under a flag of truce, with the terms dictated by the Prince Regent, and a demand for the immediate liberation of the consul, and the people of the *Prometheus*. The *Severn* was directed to tow the boat, but as she made very little way, the boat was ordered by signal to cast off, and proceed alone to the shore. At eleven o'clock, she was met outside the mole by the captain of the port, who received the communication, and promised an answer in two hours. In the mean time, a breeze springing up from the sea, the fleet stood into the bay, and lay to about a mile from the town.

At two o'clock the boat was seen returning, with the signal that no answer had been given. The *Queen Charlotte* immediately telegraphed to the fleet, "Are you ready?" Immediately the affirmative was displayed from every ship, and all bore up to their appointed stations.

The *Queen Charlotte* led to the attack. It was Lord Exmouth's intention not to reply to the enemy's fire in bearing down, unless it should become galling. In that case, the middle and main-deck guns, thirty long 24-pounders, were to have opened; keeping the upper deck for shortening sail, and the lower for working the cables. The guns on these decks were not primed until the ship had anchored. But the Algerines reserved their fire, confident in the strength of their defences, and expecting to carry the flagship by boarding her from the gun-boats, which were all filled with men. Steered by the master of the fleet, Mr. Gaze, who had sailed with Lord Exmouth in every ship he commanded from the beginning of the war, the *Queen Charlotte* proceeded silently to her position. At half-past two, she anchored by the stern, just half a cable's length from the Mole-head, and was lashed by a hawser to the mainmast of an Algerine brig, which lay at the entrance of the harbour. Her starboard broadside flanked all the batteries from the Mole-head to the Light-house. The Mole was crowded with troops, many of whom got upon the parapet to look at the ship; and Lord Exmouth, observing them as he stood upon the poop, waved to them to move away. As soon as the ship was fairly placed, and her cables stoppered, the crew gave three hearty cheers, such as Englishmen only can give. Scarcely had the sound of the last died away, when a gun was fired from the upper tier of the eastern battery; and a second, and a third followed in quick succession. One of the shots struck the *Superb*. At the first flash, Lord Exmouth gave the order, "Stand by!" at the second. "Fire!" The report of the third gun was drowned in the thunder of *Queen Charlotte's* broadside.



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The enemy now opened from all their batteries, the *Queen Charlotte* and *Leander* being the only ships which had yet reached their stations. Preparations had been previously made in all, to avoid the necessity of exposing the men aloft when shortening sail. Following the flag-ship, the *Superb* anchored about two hundred and fifty yards astern of her, and the *Minden* at about her own length from the *Superb*. The *Albion* came to astern of the *Minded*, which passed her stream cable out of the larboard gun-room port to the *Albion's* bow, and brought the two ships together. The *Impregnable* was anchored astern of the *Albion*.

The large frigates, and the Dutch squadron, particularly the *Melampus*, their flag-ship, went into action under a very heavy fire, and with a gallantry that never was surpassed. The *Leander* had placed herself on the *Queen Charlotte's* larboard bow, at the entrance of the harbour; her starboard broadside bearing upon the Algerine gun-boats with the after guns, and upon the Fishmarket battery with the others. The *Severn* lay ahead of the *Leander*, with all her starboard broadside bearing upon the Fishmarket battery. Beyond her the *Glasgow* fired upon the town batteries with her larboard guns. The Dutch squadron took the assigned position, before the works to the southward of the town. It was their Admiral's intention to place the *Melampus* in the centre; but his second ahead, the *Diana*, having anchored too far to the southward to allow this, he pushed the *Melampus* past her, and anchored close astern of the *Glasgow*.

The two smaller frigates, the *Hebrus* and *Granicus*, were left to take part in the battle wherever they might find an opening. Eager to gain a position, in the line, the *Hebrus* pressed forward to place herself next the flag-ship, till, becalmed by the cannonade, she was obliged to anchor on the *Queen Charlotte's* larboard quarter. Captain Wise, of the *Granicus*, waited until all the ships had taken their stations. Then, setting topgallant-sails and courses, he steered for where Lord Exmouth's flag was seen towering above the smoke; and with a seamanship equalled only by his intrepidity, anchored in the open space between the *Queen Charlotte* and *Superb*; thus, with a small-class frigate, taking a position, of which, said Lord Exmouth, a three-decker might be justly proud.

Eastward of the Lighthouse, at the distance of two thousand yards, were placed the bomb-vessels; whose shells were thrown with admirable precision by the Marine Artillery. The smaller vessels, except the *Mutine*, which anchored, continued under sail, firing occasionally wherever they saw opportunity. The flotilla of gun, rocket, and mortar boats, directed, by Captain Michell, were distributed at the openings between the line-of-battle ships, and at the entrance to the Mole.



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Thus the ships commanded the strongest of the enemy's defences, while they were exposed to the weakest part of his fire. The officers and men felt new confidence when they saw the power derived from the admirable disposition of their force. All behaved most nobly; and it was not long before the state of the Algerine batteries gave proof that their courage was fully equalled by their skill.

In a few minutes, indeed before the battle had become general, the *Queen Charlotte* had ruined the fortifications on the Mole-head. She then sprang her broadside towards the northward, to bear upon the batteries over the gate which leads to the Mole, and upon the upper works of the Lighthouse. Her shot struck with the most fatal accuracy, crumbling the tower of the Lighthouse to ruins, and bringing down gun after gun from the batteries. The last of these guns was dismantled just as the artillerymen were in the act of discharging it; when an Algerine chief was seen to spring upon the ruins of the parapet, and with impotent rage, to shake his scimitar against the ship. Her men proved themselves as expert amidst the realities of war, as they had before shown themselves in exercise; and some of them were detected amusing themselves, in the wantonness of their skill, by firing at the Algerine flag-staffs.

Soon after the battle began, the enemy's flotilla of gun-boats advanced, with a daring which deserved a better fate, to board the *Queen Charlotte* and *Leander*. The smoke covered them at first, but as soon as they were seen, a few guns, chiefly from the *Leander*, sent thirty-three out of thirty-seven to the bottom.

At four o'clock, when a general and heavy fire had been maintained for more than an hour without producing any appearance of submission, Lord Exmouth determined to destroy the Algerine ships. Accordingly, the *Leander* having first been ordered to cease firing, the flag-ship's barge, directed by Lieutenant Peter Richards, with Major Gossett, of the Miners, Lieutenant Wolrige, of the Marines, and Mr. M'Clintock, a midshipman, boarded the nearest frigate, and fired her so effectually with the laboratory torches, and a carcass-shell placed on the main deck, that she was completely in flames almost before the barge's crew were over her side. The crew of a rocket-boat belonging to the *Hebrus* were prompted by a natural, but unfortunate ardour, to follow the barge, though forbidden; but the boat pulling heavily, she became exposed to a fire of musketry, which killed an officer and three men, and wounded several others. Lord Exmouth stood watching the barge from the gangway, delighted with the gallantry and promptitude with which his orders were executed. When the frigate burst into a flame, he telegraphed to the fleet the animating signal, "Infallible!" and as the barge was returning, he ordered those around him to welcome her alongside with three cheers.



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It was hoped that the flames would communicate from this frigate to the rest of the Algerine shipping; but she burnt from her moorings, and passing clear of her consorts, drifted along the broadsides of the *Queen Charlotte* and *Leander*, and grounded a-head of the latter, under the wall of the town. The gun-boats, and the *Queen Charlotte's* launch, then opened with carcass-shells upon the largest frigate, which was moored in the centre of the other ships, too far within the Mole to be attempted safely by boarding. They soon set her on fire, and notwithstanding the exertions of the Algerines, she was completely in flames by six o'clock. From her the fire communicated, first to all the other vessels in the port, except a brig and a schooner, moored in the upper part of it, and afterwards to the storehouses and arsenal. At a little past seven, she came drifting out of the harbour, and passed so close to the flag-ship as nearly to involve her in the same destruction.

About sunset, a message was received from Rear-Admiral Milne, requesting that a frigate might be sent to divert from the *Impregnable* some of the fire under which she was suffering. She had anchored more to the northward than was intended, and consequently became exposed to the heavy battery on the point of rock beyond the lighthouse, and which was covered from the fire of the rest of the fleet. The *Glasgow* weighed immediately, but the wind had been driven away by the cannonade, and she was only able, after three-quarters of an hour's exertion, to reach a new position between the *Severn* and *Leander*; a better for annoying the enemy, but where she was herself more exposed, and suffered in proportion. As it was found impossible to assist the *Impregnable*, Lord Exmouth sent on board Mr. Triscott, one of his aides-de-camp, with permission to haul off. The *Impregnable* was then dreadfully cut up; 150 men had been already killed and wounded, a full third of them by an explosion, and the shot were still coming in fast; but her brave crew, guided and encouraged by the Rear-Admiral and Captain Brace, two of the most distinguished and successful officers in the service, would not allow her to go thus out of battle; and she kept her station, maintaining an animated fire to the last. To relieve her in some degree, an ordnance sloop, which had been fitted at Gibraltar as an explosion-vessel, with 143 barrels of powder, was placed at the disposal of the Rear-Admiral. She had been intended for the destruction of the Algerine fleet, but this service had already been effected by other means. Conducted by Lieutenant Fleming, who had been commanding a gun-boat near the *Queen Charlotte*, with Major Reed, of the Engineers, and Captain Herbert Powell, a volunteer on board the *Impregnable*, the explosion-vessel was run on shore under the battery which had annoyed her, where, at nine o'clock, she blew up.



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The fleet slackened their fire towards night, as the guns of the enemy became silenced, and the ships began to feel the necessity for husbanding their ammunition. Their expenditure had been beyond all parallel. They fired nearly 118 tons of powder, and 50,000 shot, weighing more than 500 tons of iron; besides 960 thirteen and ten-inch shells thrown by the bomb-vessels, and the shells and rockets from the flotilla. Such a fire, close, concentrated, and well-directed as it was, nothing could resist; and the sea-defences of Algiers, with great part of the town itself, were shattered and crumbled to ruins.

At a little before ten, the objects of the attack having been effected, the *Queen Charlotte's* bower-cable was cut, and her head hauled round to seaward. She continued, however, to engage with all the guns abaft the mainmast, sometimes on both sides. Warps were run out to gain an offing, but many of them were cut by shot from the batteries southward of the town, which had been very partially engaged, and also from forts on the hills out of reach of the ships' guns. A very light air was felt about half-past ten, and sail was made; but the ship, after cutting from her remaining warps and anchors, was manageable only by the aid of her boats towing, and then the only point gained was keeping her head from the land. At eleven she began to draw out from the batteries, and at twenty-five minutes past she ceased to fire. The breeze freshened, and a tremendous storm of thunder and lightning came on, with torrents of rain; while the flaming ships and storehouses illuminated all the ruins, and increased the grandeur of the scene. In about three hours the storm subsided, and as soon as the ship was made snug, Lord Exmouth assembled in his cabin all the wounded who could be moved with safety, that they might unite with him and his officers in offering thanksgiving to God for their victory and preservation.

The two Admirals came on board the *Queen Charlotte* as soon as they could leave their ships, and spoke their feelings of admiration and gratitude to Lord Exmouth with all the warmth of language and expression. The Dutch Admiral, who, with his squadron, had most nobly emulated the conduct of his British allies, declared himself in terms of the highest eulogy of the *Queen Charlotte*, which, he said, by her commanding position and the effect of her fire, had saved five hundred men to the fleet. Perhaps there was no exaggeration in the praise; for the destruction occasioned by her first broadside, as she lay flanking the Mole, must have contributed much to protect the ships which had not yet reached their stations; and the havoc she inflicted by a cannonade of nine hours must have been great indeed, since her fire could destroy the fortifications on the Mole-head in a few minutes.



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In no former general action had the casualties been so great in proportion to the force employed. One hundred and twenty-eight were killed, and six hundred and ninety wounded, in the British ships, and thirteen killed and fifty-two wounded in the Dutch squadron. Yet, except the *Impregnable*, which had fifty men killed, no ship suffered so much as is usual in a severe engagement. Generally, in fleet actions, the brunt of the battle, and the chief amount of losses, fall upon a few; but here every ship had her allotted duty, and was closely engaged throughout. After the *Impregnable*, the frigates suffered the most, particularly the *Granicus*, which took a line-of-battle ship's station; and the *Leander*, which was much cut up by the Fish-market and other batteries, and as late as seven o'clock was obliged to carry out a hawser to *the Severn*, to enable her to bear her broadside upon one which annoyed her. The loss in the other line-of-battle ships was remarkably small. They had together but twenty-six killed, including the casualties in their respective boats.

Lord Exmouth escaped most narrowly. He was struck in three places; and a cannon-shot tore away the skirts of his coat. A button was afterwards found in the signal locker; and the shot broke one of the glasses and bulged the rim of the spectacles in his pocket. He gave the spectacles to his valued friend, the late gallant Sir Richard Keats, who caused their history to be engraven on them, and directed, that when he died, they should be restored to Lord Exmouth's family, to be kept as a memorial of his extraordinary preservation.

On the 28th, at daylight, Lieutenant Burgess was sent on shore with a flag of truce, and the demands of the preceding morning; the bomb-vessels at the same time resuming their positions. The captain of one of the destroyed frigates met the boat, and declared that an answer had been sent on the day before, but that no boat was at hand to receive it. Shortly after, the captain of the port came off, accompanied by the Swedish consul, and informed Lord Exmouth that all his demands would be submitted to. On the morning of the 29th, the captain of the port came off again, being now accompanied by the British consul; upon which Captain Brisbane, of the flag-ship, went on shore, and had a conference with the Dey. Sir Charles Penrose, whom the Admiral had expected to the last, arrived this day in the *Ister* frigate, from Malta, where he had waited for his expected orders, until he heard that Lord Exmouth was in the Mediterranean. Lord Exmouth committed to him the management of the negotiations, the only compliment he could now offer. Where nothing remained but submission for the vanquished, the arrangements were soon concluded, and next day the final result was officially communicated to the fleet.

"*Queen Charlotte*, Algiers Bay, August 30, 1816.

"General Memorandum.



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“The Commander-in-Chief is happy to inform the fleet of the final termination of their strenuous exertions, by the signature of peace, confirmed under a salute of twenty-one guns, on the following conditions, dictated by His Royal Highness the Prince Regent of England.

“I. The abolition of Christian slavery for ever.

“II. The delivery to my flag of all slaves in the dominions of the Dey, to whatever nation they may belong, at noon to-morrow.

“III. To deliver also to my flag all money received by him for the redemption of slaves since the commencement of this year—at noon also to-morrow.

“IV. Reparation has been made to the British consul for all losses he has sustained in consequence of his confinement.

“V. The Dey has made a public apology, in presence of his ministers and officers, and begged pardon of the consul in terms dictated by the captain of the *Queen Charlotte*.

“The Commander-in-Chief takes this opportunity of again returning his public thanks to the Admirals, Captains, Officers, Seamen, Marines, Royal Sappers and Miners, Royal Marine Artillery, and the Royal Rocket Corps, for the noble support he has received from them throughout the whole of this arduous service; and he is pleased to direct that on Sunday next a public thanksgiving shall be offered up to Almighty God, for the signal interposition of his Divine Providence during the conflict which took place on the 27th, between his Majesty’s fleet and the ferocious enemies of mankind.

It is requested that this memorandum may be read to the ship’s company.

“To the Admirals, Captains, Officers, Seamen, Marines, Royal Sappers and Miners, Royal Marine Artillery, and the Royal Rocket Corps.”

Above twelve hundred slaves were embarked on the 31st, making, with those liberated a few weeks before, more than three thousand, whom, by address or force, Lord Exmouth had delivered from slavery.[13] Having sent them to their respective countries, and leaving a ship to receive a few who had yet to come up from the interior, he sailed on the 3rd of September for England. On the 8th, when on his way to Gibraltar, he wrote an account of the battle to his brother, to whom he had previously sent a very laconic communication, stating merely the result.



“It has pleased God to give me again the opportunity of writing you, and it has also pleased Him to give success to our efforts against these hordes of barbarians. I never, however, saw any set of men more obstinate at their guns, and it was superior fire only that could keep them back. To be sure, nothing could stand before the *Queen Charlotte’s* broadside. Everything fell before it; and the Swedish consul assures me we killed above five hundred at the very first fire, from the crowded way



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in which troops were drawn up, four deep above the gun boats, which were also full of men. I had myself beckoned to many around the guns close to us to move away, previous to giving the order to fire; and I believe they are within bounds, when they state their loss at seven thousand men. Our old friend John Gaze was as steady as a rock; and it was a glorious sight to see the *Charlotte* take her anchorage, and to see her flag towering on high, when she appeared to be in the flames of the Mole itself; and never was a ship nearer burnt; it almost scorched me off the poop; we were obliged to haul in the ensign, or it would have caught fire. Everybody behaved uncommonly well. Admiral Milne came on board at two o'clock in the morning, and kissed my hand fifty times before the people, as did the Dutch Admiral, Von Capellan. I was but slightly touched in the thigh, face, and fingers—my glass cut in my hand, and the skirts of my coat torn off by a large shot; but as I bled a good deal, it looked as if I was badly hurt, and it was gratifying to see and hear how it was received even in the cockpit, which was then pretty full. My thigh is not quite skinned over, but I am perfectly well, and hope to reach Portsmouth by the 10th of October. Ferdinand has sent me a diamond star. Wise behaved most nobly, and took up a line-of-battle ship's station; but all behaved nobly. I never saw such enthusiasm in all my service. Not a wretch shrunk any where; and I assure you it was a very arduous task, but I had formed a very correct judgment of all I saw, and was confident, if supported, I should succeed. I could not wait for an offshore wind to attack; the season was too far advanced, and the land-winds become light and calmy. I was forced to attack at once with a lee-shore, or perhaps wait a week for a precarious wind along shore; and I was quite sure I should have a breeze off the land about one or two in the morning, and equally sure we could hold out to that time. Blessed be God! it came, and a dreadful night with it, of thunder, lightning, and rain, as heavy as I ever saw. Several ships had expended all their powder, and been supplied from the brigs. I had latterly husbanded, and only fired when they fired on us; and we expended 350 barrels, and 5,420 shot, weighing above 65 tons of iron. Such a state of ruin of fortifications and houses was never seen, and it is the opinion of all the consuls, that two hours more fire would have levelled the town; the walls are all so cracked. Even the aqueducts were broken up, and the people famishing for water. The sea-defences, to be made effective, must be rebuilt from the foundation. The fire all round the Mole looked like Pandemonium. I never saw anything so grand and so terrific, for I was not on velvet, for fear they would drive on board us. The copper-bottoms floated full of fiery hot charcoal, and were red hot above the surface, so that we could not hook on our fire-grapnels to put the boats on, and could do nothing but push fire-booms,



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and spring the ship off by our warps, as occasion required.”

The battle of Algiers forms a class by itself among naval victories. It was a new thing to place a fleet in a position surrounded by such formidable batteries. Bold and original in the conception, it was most brilliant and complete in execution. Nor was it more splendid for the honour, than happy in the fruits. It broke the chains of thousands; it gave security to millions;—it delivered Christendom from a scourge and a disgrace. To complete the happiness of the achievement, a nation co-operated, the natural ally of England, and the truest of her friends; bound to her by the proudest recollections of patriotism, and the dearest ties of religion; and which, if it should be required once more to strike down the power of whatever evil principle may desolate Europe, will again be found at her side, strong in virtue as in courage, to emulate her prowess, and to share the triumph.

## FOOTNOTES:

[12] Sir Israel, his brother; Captains Pownoll and Fleetwood, his sons; Captain Harward, and Sir Lawrence Halsted, his sons-in-law.

[13] Slaves liberated by Admiral Lord Exmouth:—

### AT ALGIERS.

Neapolitans and Sicilians	1,110
Sardinians and Genoese	62
Piedmontaise	6
Romans	174
Tuscans	6
Spaniards	226
Portuguese	1
Greeks	7
Dutch	28
English	18
French	2
Austrians	2—1,642

### AT TUNIS.

Neapolitans and Sicilians	524
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Sardinians and Genoese 257—781

AT TRIPOLI.

Neapolitans and Sicilians	422
Sardinians and Genoese	144
Romans	10
Hamburghers	4—580

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3,003

## CHAPTER XII.

### LORD EXMOUTH'S RETIREMENT AND DEATH.

Lord Exmouth's services were acknowledged as became such a victory. He was advanced to the dignity of a Viscount, and received an honourable augmentation of his arms. In the centre of the shield a triumphal crown was placed by the civic wreath; below was a lion rampant, and above them a ship, lying at the Mole-head of Algiers, and surmounted with the star of victory. The former supporters were exchanged for a lion on the one side, and a Christian slave, holding aloft the cross, and dropping his broken fetters, on the other. The name "Algiers" was given for an additional motto. The kings of Holland, Spain, and Sardinia, conferred upon him orders of



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knighthood. The Pope sent him a valuable cameo. The city of London voted him its freedom, and a sword, ornamented with diamonds, which was presented by the Lord Mayor at a banquet, appropriately given by the Ironmongers' Company, as trustees of a considerable estate left for ransoming Christian slaves in Barbary by Mr. Betton, a member of the company, who had himself endured the miseries of slavery. He received the freedom of the city of Oxford, and the honorary degree of D.C.L. from the University. A society for promoting the liberation of Christian slaves, lately formed at Paris, chiefly by the exertions of Sir Sidney Smith, caused a medal to be struck to commemorate the victory. It presents a well-executed profile of the Admiral, with a suitable inscription on the reverse.

In general, every disposition was shown in France to do justice to Lord Exmouth's merit on this occasion. Yet it was to be expected that the feelings so natural under the circumstances of their recent defeat, and the present occupation of their territory, would lead many to detract from the honours of the nation which had so severely humbled them. Some illiberal reflections which appeared in the French journals, prompted the following lines by the late Lord Grenville:—

“These hands toil-worn, these limbs by fetters galled,  
These bodies, scarred by many a servile blow,  
These spirits, wasted by disease and woe,  
These Christian souls, by miscreant rage enthralled,  
What band of heroes now recalls to life?—  
Gives us again to hail our native shores,  
And to each fond, despairing heart, restores  
The long-lost parent, the long-widowed wife?  
O Britain! still to lawless power a foe,  
'Gainst faithless pirate armed, or blood-stained Gaul!  
Vain is the taunt which mocks thy lavish cost,  
Thy thankless toil, thy blood poured out for all,  
Thy laurels, gained in fight, in treaty lost—  
HEAVEN STILL SHALL BLESS THE HAND WHICH LAYS THE OPPRESSOR  
LOW!”

A medal, most appropriate in the devices, and of the most exquisite workmanship, was executed by command of his late Majesty George IV., then Prince Regent. The medals are of gold. Only four were struck, one of which was presented to Lord Exmouth, and remains in the possession of his eldest surviving son. The officers of the squadron presented to their commander a magnificent piece of plate, of 1,400 guineas value, representing the Mole of Algiers, with its fortifications. The subscription exceeded the cost; and the surplus was paid to the Naval Charitable Society, of which Lord Exmouth was a vice-president.[14]



His venerable and excellent friend, Admiral Schank, under whose command he had fought his first action, went to Teignmouth to receive him, when he came home from this, the last of his triumphs. The day of his return was made a general festival, and the inhabitants went out to meet him with all the arrangement and display which could manifest admiration and attachment.



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The promotion which followed the victory was to have been on the usual scale, but Lord Exmouth succeeded in obtaining some extension of it; for he considered it inadequate to the merits of the junior officers, who had enjoyed unusual opportunities for distinguishing themselves. The flotilla of armed boats, which had behaved most gallantly, and afforded essential service, was commanded chiefly by mates and midshipmen, and he pressed their claims upon the Admiralty with much perseverance. He urged that commissions should be given to all who had passed their examinations; and submitted a list of the officers whom he thought entitled to promotion, drawn up in such a form as to be readily examined and referred to, and in which their respective services and claims were enforced in a manner which marked at once his discrimination of their merits, and the warm interest he took in their welfare.

The victory was prominently noticed in the royal speech, and on the 3rd of February received the thanks of Parliament. The First Lord of the Admiralty, who introduced the motion to the House of Lords, expatiated at length on the circumstances which enhanced the merit of the commander:—"When the expedition against Algiers was determined on, it became necessary to collect men from different guard-ships, and to call for the services of volunteers for this particular enterprise. He mentioned this circumstance, because those who knew the value which naval officers attach to a crew long accustomed to act together, would be the better enabled to appreciate the skill and exertions of Lord Exmouth, and the difficulties he had to contend with, in rendering crews, collected as he had stated, efficient for his purpose. To that object Lord Exmouth devoted his daily, his hourly attention, and accomplished it in a manner which reflected the highest credit on his judgment and ability. He then proceeded with his squadron on the appointed service. He proposed certain terms to the Dey of Algiers, according to his instructions, and no satisfactory reply being given, the ships took their positions. It was due to Lord Exmouth here to state a circumstance not generally known. An opinion had prevailed in many quarters that accident and the elements had been very favourable to Lord Exmouth in the execution of the enterprise: but the fact was, that when Government had determined on the undertaking, many persons, and among them several naval officers, were of opinion that the defences were so strong that the attack could not succeed. Not so Lord Exmouth, though he was perfectly aware of the difficulties with which he had to contend. He had himself formed the plan of his operations, and gave it as his opinion that the object might be accomplished, not from any idle confidence, but founded on the reasons which he stated and the plan which he had formed. He had in this plan settled the position which every ship was to take, and when the despatches came, he (Lord Melville) had



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noticed that the positions actually taken were exactly those which had been before settled. The whole scheme of attack was before prepared by him, and exactly followed; and the whole transaction reflected the highest credit upon Lord Exmouth as a naval officer, as well as upon his perseverance and gallantry." After describing the battle and its result, and descanting upon the enthusiasm which animated every officer and man, and the gallantry they displayed, Lord Melville alluded to the co-operation and effectual assistance afforded by the Dutch squadron, to which also he moved the thanks of the House. "The flag of the Netherlands had long been distinguished in Europe, and the officers and seamen had acquired a high renown for skill and valour. In this enterprise that flag had again appeared, and a noble emulation prevailed between the two squadrons as to which of them should most strenuously exert itself to accomplish the common object."

Similar motions were brought forward in the House of Commons by Lord Castlereagh, who dwelt on the splendid character of the transaction, upon which, he said, there could be but one opinion either in that House or throughout Europe. Alluding to the very conflicting opinions which had prevailed on the subject of attacking Algiers, he eulogized the great ability and judgment of Lord Exmouth, whose perfect accuracy had been so fully proved by the result. "He should not attempt," he said, "to add any thing more to an action so glorious both as to the principles upon which it was undertaken, and the mode of carrying it into execution, but only observe that he intended to extend the thanks to the officers and seamen of their brave ally, the King of the Netherlands, whose co-operation had been so beneficial. He was sure the House would feel a peculiar gratification in seeing the navy of Holland united with ours for the general liberties of mankind, and be anxious to mark their sense of the services performed by the Dutch Admiral, his brave officers, and sailors."

"So great were Lord Exmouth's professional abilities," said Mr. Law, who seconded the motion, "that whatever he undertook he was sure to succeed in. From the commencement of that series of great operations which arose out of the revolutionary war, success had uniformly marked his long career. With respect to the late brilliant enterprise, too much could not be said of it; and it was gratifying to know that the feelings of the House and the country were the same."

"No one," said Lord Cochrane, "was better acquainted than himself with the power possessed by batteries over a fleet; and he would say that the conduct of Lord Exmouth and the fleet deserved all the praise which that House could bestow. The attack was nobly achieved, in a way that a British fleet always performed such services; and the vote had his most cordial concurrence, for he never knew, or had heard, of anything more gallant than the manner in which Lord Exmouth had laid his ships alongside the Algerine batteries."



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Lord Exmouth had now gained everything he could hope for. He was still in the full vigour of life, with the prospect of many years of health. His children had all been spared to him; and he was accustomed to dwell on their conduct with a father's pride and satisfaction. With a liberality not often displayed, he gave them their full portions as they successively left him; and he had the gratification of entrusting to each of his sons one of the many honourable tributes to his worth and services which he had received from different public bodies. His eldest son, who had served many years under his orders, was living near Teignmouth, at the family mansion of Canonteign. He represented Launceston in Parliament, and when he first entered the House had exerted himself, though without success, to obtain for seamen serving on foreign stations the privilege, since granted, of receiving part of their pay abroad. He had been much impressed with the evils of the former system, which his liberality had obviated for his own crews. Lord Exmouth maintained a most unreserved intercourse with him, and often expressed a confidence in the strongest terms, that he would do honour to the rank he was to inherit: hopes never to be realized, for he survived his father only a few months.

It is a memorable illustration of a truth, which all admit, but none entirely feel, till their own experience has taught them the vanity of worldly success, that when the attainment of every object had left him without a wish ungratified, Lord Exmouth would sometimes confess that he had been happier amidst his early difficulties. Indeed, his natural character, and all his habits, were very unfavourable to repose. The command at Plymouth was given him in 1817, on the death of Sir John Duckworth; but this, though it prevented a too abrupt transition to complete retirement, was a life of inactivity, when contrasted with his general pursuits for almost fifty years.

While he held this command he was required to attend in his place in the House of Lords on the trial of the Queen, one of the most lamentable events in modern English history. He had received her then Royal Highness on board his flag-ship in the Mediterranean with all the attentions due to her exalted rank, and his principal officers were assembled to pay their respects to her. But when he was desired to furnish a royal standard, which, it was said, the vessel was entitled to carry, though a foreigner, he replied that the standard of England could be carried only by a British man of war. He shared the temporary unpopularity of the noblemen who supported the bill, and the mob at Plymouth and its neighbourhood expressed their feelings towards him with much violence; but this, as far as he was concerned, gave him no disquiet. He had not then to learn how little this kind of hostility is to be regarded, when it is provoked by the faithful discharge of duty. When the storm was at the highest he wrote the following letter:—



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“Admiralty House, Plymouth Dock, Nov. 20, 1820.

“MY DEAR BROTHER,—I am much obliged by your kind letter, and wish I could give you in return anything good, or worth detailing. The fact is, the people are mad, and the world is mad; and where it will end, the Lord only knows; but as sure as we live, the days of trouble are very fast approaching, when there will be much contention and much bloodshed, and changes out of all measure and human calculation. You and I have no choice. Loyalty is all our duty, and we shall, no doubt, stick to it. As for myself, you may well think me D.D.,<sup>[15]</sup> for I am burnt, and kicked, and torn in pieces for many nights; but here I am, quite whole, sound, and merry, in spite of them all, poor fools! In a fortnight they will fain know how to make amends. They have a particular dislike to me, and I am glad of it. We shall live to see it changed.”

With the command at Plymouth, Lord Exmouth’s public life may be considered to have ended; for though he shrunk from no duty which his rank and character imposed upon him, he would not submit to become a political partizan. This decision, so happy for his peace, was the result of his habitual judgment and feeling. In a letter before alluded to, which he wrote for his eldest son before he went to Algiers, he observed, that though not rich, he would be independent, and enjoined him never to entangle himself with party politics. While none more firmly supported the great principles upon which the security and welfare of the country rest, he chose always to keep the high position of an independent British nobleman. The splendid rewards which his services had obtained for him, he received, not as from any particular administration, but from his country; and he felt himself entitled to assert the same independence in the House of Lords, which he had always displayed as a commander. Thus, by a conduct equally prudent and honourable, he secured, through periods of great political excitement, an exemption almost singular, for a man in his position, from the attacks of party.

At the same time, his best services were always at the command of the Government, who frequently availed themselves of his judgment and experience. Few important questions occurred in connection with his own profession, upon which he was not consulted. Most of these were necessarily confidential; but the following may with propriety be noticed. In 1818, when the extreme difficulties of the country demanded the utmost possible retrenchment, it was proposed, among other measures of economy, to destroy Pendennis Castle. Two commissioners, sent to survey and report upon this step, were instructed to communicate first with Lord Exmouth. His opinion decided the preservation of this noble fortress; which is at once so important from its position, and so interesting for its heroic defence, when, in the great rebellion, it obtained the honourable distinction of being the last stronghold of loyalty.



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On the question of concessions to the Roman Catholics in 1829, his opinions and conduct were most decided. His eldest son resigned his seat for a borough, which he held unconditionally, under the influence of the Duke of Northumberland, as soon as that nobleman declared his intention to support the claims. The ground of Lord Exmouth's opposition to the measure has been already given in his words.

That moral elevation, not always associated with powerful talent and splendid success, which forms the most admirable part of Lord Exmouth's character, was derived from religion. Young as he was when he first entered the service, and though such principles and feelings could not be supposed then to be very strongly fixed, yet he was guarded in his conduct, and always prompt to check any irreverent allusion to serious subjects. His youth was passed in camps and ships, at a time when a coarse and profane conduct too much prevailed, now happily almost unknown; but he was never deterred by a false shame from setting a proper example. On board his first frigate, the *Winchelsea*, the duties of the Sundays were regularly observed. He always dressed in full uniform on that day, and, having no chaplain, read the morning service to his crew, whenever the weather permitted them to be assembled. Advancing in his brilliant career, the same feelings were more and more strikingly displayed. It was his practice to have a special and general service of thanksgiving after every signal deliverance, or success. Too often is it found, that with the accession of worldly honours, the man becomes more forgetful of the good Providence from which he received them. From this evil, Lord Exmouth was most happily kept; and additional distinctions only confirmed the unaffected simplicity and benevolence of his character. When he was fitting out his fleet for Algiers, amidst all the anxiety of hurried preparations, he took care that every ship should be properly supplied with the sacred volume. For this purpose, he obtained from the Naval and Military Bible Society, of which he was a Vice President, every copy which could be procured at so short a notice. Finally, after this, the last and greatest of his services, a battle of almost unexampled severity and duration, and fought less for his country than for the world, his gratitude to the Giver of victory was expressed in a manner the most edifying and delightful.

With such principles, he might well have hoped for happiness when he retired from public life. Religion alone can fill and satisfy the most active and capacious mind; but that its power may be felt to calm, strengthen, and support, under whatever circumstances of endurance, or of action, it must govern the character always, and be the supreme controlling principle. For this, the position of a naval officer is not favourable. War has much, in addition to the miseries and evils it directly creates, which only necessity can excuse; and there is too little leisure for reflection amidst the anxiety of early struggles, the full career of success, or the pressure of exciting and important duties.



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But when external responsibilities had ceased to divert his attention from himself, his religious principles acquired new strength and exerted a more powerful influence. They guided him to peace; they added dignity to his character: and blessed his declining years with a serenity, at once the best evidence of their truth, and the happiest illustration of their power.

The quiet of domestic life offers little to be recorded; and except when public or private claims might call him for a short time from home, Lord Exmouth passed the remainder of his life at Teignmouth. He had nobly done his duty; and now enjoyed in honourable repose all that the gratitude of his country and the affection of his family could bestow. Though he knew himself liable to an attack which might be almost suddenly fatal, he dwelt on the prospect without alarm, for he rested upon that faith whose privilege it is to rise above present suffering, and to regard death itself as the gate of immortal life.

No man was more free from selfish feeling. His honours and success were valued for the sake of his family. His services and life were for his country. He had a truly English heart, and served her with entire devotedness. Nothing, indeed, could be a finer commentary than his own career upon her free and equal institutions, which, by the force of those qualities they so powerfully tend to create, had enabled him to rise from the condition of an unfriended orphan, to the dignity of the British peerage. Most painful, therefore, were his feelings, when revolt and anarchy in neighbouring countries were held up to be admired and imitated at home, until a praiseworthy desire of improvement had become a rage for destructive innovation. In a letter written at this time, Nov. 12th, 1831, after alluding to his own declining strength, he thus proceeds:—"I am fast approaching that end which we must all come to. My own term I feel is expiring, and happy is the man who does not live to see the destruction of his country, which discontent has brought to the verge of ruin. Hitherto thrice happy England, how art thou torn to pieces by thine own children! Strangers, who a year ago looked up to you as a happy exception in the world, with admiration, at this moment know thee not! Fire, riot, and bloodshed, are roving through the land, and God in his displeasure visits us also with pestilence; and, in fact, in one short year, we seem almost to have reached the climax of misery. One cannot sit down to put one's thoughts to paper, without feeling oppressed by public events, and with vain thought of how and when will the evils terminate. *That* must be left to God's mercy, for I believe man is at this moment unequal to the task."

He then passes to another subject. It was a trait in his character, that, through all his success, he never forgot his early friends.



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“When I sat down, I intended to commence by letting you know that I have heard from — of the last week’s illness and decease of our early, and I believe almost our oldest friend, —. He states, that he died, by God’s mercy, free from pain; that his suffering was not much, and he bore it patiently, with a calm mind, keeping his senses to the last few hours. That you had paid your old friend a last visit, from which, he says, he appeared to be quite revived; that his eyes sparkled with inward joy, and that he had asked kindly after me; that he went off at last in a kind of sleep, without a struggle, and had felt all the comfort which could be given him by a sincere old friend. I was very glad to hear that you had given him the comfort of taking leave of him, for I readily believe he ever felt for you unabated friendship, and for myself also. I think we must have known him above three-score years. I am sure you will derive pleasure from having shown him that your friendship could only end by his death.”

In the last week of December, 1831, after an extraordinary exemption from such trials in his own family, he lost his youngest daughter. Little more than two months elapsed, when on the 2nd of March the warning was repeated in the almost sudden death of a grandchild, daughter of his eldest son. He communicated this event with the reflection —“We have long been mercifully spared. Death has at length entered our family, and it behoves us all to be watchful.”[16]

In the spring of this year he was made Vice-Admiral of England, and was honoured at the same time with a very flattering letter from his Sovereign. This he immediately enclosed to his elder brother, to whom he knew it would give pleasure. Of the appointment itself, he remarked, “I shall have it only for one year.” He held it but for a few months.

In May, Sir Israel Pellew was on his death-bed; and Lord Exmouth, though he now travelled with much difficulty and pain, could not refuse himself the melancholy satisfaction of a parting visit to one with whom he had been so closely and affectionately united. Their brother came up from Falmouth on the same errand, and on this painful occasion they all met for the last time. He then returned to his home, which he never left again.

He cherished a very strong attachment to the Church; and for more than thirty years had been a member of the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, which he joined when the claims of the society were so little appreciated, that only principle could have prompted the step. It might therefore be expected that he would feel deep anxiety when the safety of that Church was threatened. But upon this subject his mind was firm; and in one of the last letters he ever wrote, dated August 28th, he declares his confidence in the most emphatic language. After some personal observations to the friend he was addressing, one of his old officers, he alludes to the cholera, then



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raging in his neighbourhood; “which,” he says, “I am much inclined to consider an infliction of Providence, to show his power to the discontented of the world, who have long been striving against the government of man, and are commencing their attacks on our Church. But they will fail! God will never suffer his Church to fall; and the world will see that his mighty arm is not shortened, nor his power diminished. I put my trust in Him, and not in man; and I bless Him, that He has enabled me to see the difference between improvement and destruction.”

Not many days after, he suffered a most violent attack of the illness he had long anticipated. The immediate danger was soon averted; but the extent of the disease left not the smallest hope of recovery. He lingered until the 23rd of January, calmly waiting the event which his gradually increasing weakness convinced him was inevitable. Sustained by the principle which had guided him so long, his death-bed became the scene of his best and noblest triumph. “Every hour of his life is a sermon,” said an officer who was often with him; “I have seen him great in battle, but never so great as on his death-bed.” Full of hope and peace, he advanced with the confidence of a Christian to his last conflict, and when nature was at length exhausted, he closed a life of brilliant and important service, with a death more happy, and not less glorious, than if he had fallen in the hour of victory.

Lord Exmouth was buried at Christow, the parish in which are the family mansion and estate of Canonteign. The flag under which he fought at Algiers was used for a pall, and a young oak, to bear his name, was planted near the grave; a suitable memorial for a British seaman.

Two noble line-of-battle ships, the *Algiers* and the *Exmouth*, of 91-guns each, and fitted with screw propellers, of which one is just now commissioned and the other just launched, preserve in the navy the memory of his name and victory, and may yet be commanded by officers trained by his care, and formed by his example.

### FOOTNOTES:

[14] The plate bore the following most flattering inscription:—

TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE  
EDWARD, VISCOUNT AND BARON EXMOUTH,  
And a Baronet,  
Knight Grand Cross of the Most Honourable Military Order of the Bath,  
Of the Royal and distinguished Order of Charles the Third of Spain,  
Of the Royal Sicilian Order of St. Ferdinand, and of Merit,  
Knight of the Royal Sardinian Supreme Order of the Annunciation.



Knt. Gd. Cross of the Royal Sardinian Order of St. Lazarus & St. Maurice,  
and of the Royal Military Order of William of the Netherlands,  
This Tribute of Admiration and Esteem  
Is most respectfully presented by  
THE REAR-ADMIRAL, CAPTAINS, AND COMMANDERS,  
Who had the honour to serve under him  
*At the memorable VICTORY gained at ALGIERS*  
On the 27th of August, 1816,  
Where, by the Judgment, Valour, & Decision of their distinguished Chief,  
Aided by his brilliant Example,  
THE GREAT CAUSE OF CHRISTIAN FREEDOM  
Was bravely Fought, and  
*NOBLY ACCOMPLISHED.*

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[15] "Discharged, dead." The mark by which a man is reported dead on the ship's books.

[16] It is a remarkable fact, that after the death of his daughter, seven members of the family died within three years.

THE END.